THE RENAISSANCE OF THE VOCAL ART

MYER

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THE

Renaissance of the Vocal Art

A PRACTICAL STUDY OF VITALITY, VITALIZED ENERGY, OF THE PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL POWERS OF THE SINGER, THROUGH FLEXIBLE, ELASTIC BODILY MOVEMENTS

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"WHEN you see something new to you in art, or hear a proposition in philosophy you never heard before, do not make haste to ridicule, deny or refute. Possibly the trouble is with yourself — who knows?"

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PREFACE.

To my readers once again through this little work, greetings. For the many kind things said of my former works by my friends, my pupils, the critic and the profession, thanks! To those who have understood and appreciated the principles laid down in my last book, "Position and Action in Singing," I will say that this little work will be an additional help. To my readers in general, who may not have fully understood or appreciated the principles of vitality, of vitalized energy, aroused and developed through the movements set forth in my last book, to such I will say that I hope this little work will make clearer those principles. I hope that it may lead them to a better understanding of the fundamental principles of the system, principles which are founded upon natural laws and common sense. In this work I have endeavored to logically formulate my system.

As it is not possible to fully study and develop any one fundamental principle of singing without

some understanding or mastery of all others, so it is not possible to write a work like this without more or less repetition. Certain subjects are so closely related, are so interdependent, that repetition cannot be avoided. I am not offering an apology for this ; I am simply stating that a certain amount of repetition is necessary.

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EXORDIUM.

MAN, to see far and clearly, must rise above his surroundings. To win great possessions, to master great truths, we must climb all the hills, all the mountains, which confront us. Unfortunately the vocal profession dwells too much upon the lowlands of tradition, or is buried too deep in the valleys of prejudice. Better things, however, will come. They must come. The current of the advanced thought, the higher thought, of this, the opening year of the twentieth century, will slowly but surely increase in power and influence, will slowly but surely broaden and deepen, until the light of reason breaks upon the vocal world. We may confidently look, in the near future, for the Renaissance of the Vocal Art.

Part First.

EVOLUTION.

The Renaissance of the Vocal Art.

ARTICLE ONE.

THE OLD ITALIAN SCHOOL OF SINGING.

THE Shibboleth, or trade cry, of the average modern vocal teacher is "The Old Italian School of Singing." How much of value there is in this may be surmised when we stop to consider that of the many who claim to teach the true Old Italian method no two of them teach at all alike, unless they happen to be pupils of the same master.

A system, a method, or a theory is not true simply because it is old. It may be old and true; it may be old and false. It may be new and false; or, what is more important, it may be new and yet true; age alone cannot stamp it with the mark of truthfulness.

The truth is, we know but little of the Old Italian School of Singing. We do know, however,

that the old Italians were an emotional and impulsive people. Their style of singing was the flexible, florid, coloratura style. This demanded freedom of action and emotional expression, which more largely than anything else accounts for their success.

The old Italians knew little or nothing of the science of voice as we know it to-day. They did know, however, the great fundamental principles of singing, which are freedom of form and action, spontaneity and naturalness. They studied Nature, and learned of her. Their style of singing, it is true, would be considered superficial at the present day, but it is generally conceded that they did make a few great singers. If the principles of the old school had not been changed or lost, if they had been retained and developed up to the present day, what a wonderful legacy the vocal profession might have inherited in this age, the beginning of the twentieth century. Adversity, however, develops art as well as individuality; hence the vocal art has much to expect in the future.

ARTICLE TWO.

THE DARK AGE OF THE VOCAL ART.

EVEN in the palmiest days of the Old Italian School, there were forces at work which were destined to influence the entire vocal world. The subtle influence of these forces was felt so gradually, and yet so surely and powerfully, that while the profession, as one might say, peacefully slept, art was changed to artificiality. Thus arose that which may be called the dark ages of the vocal art, — an age when error overshadowed truth and reason; for while real scientists, after great study and research, discovered much of the true science of voice, many who styled themselves scientists discovered much that they imagined was the true science of voice.

Upon the theories advanced by self-styled scientists, many systems of singing were based, without definite proof as to their being true or false. These systems were exploited for the benefit of those who formulated them. This condition of things prevailed, not only through the latter part

of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, but still manifests itself at the present day, and no doubt will continue to do so for many years to come.

The vocal world undoubtedly owes much to the study and research of the true scientist. All true art is based upon science, and none more than the art of voice and of singing.

Science is knowledge of facts co-ordinated, arranged, and systematized; hence science is truth. The object of science is knowledge; the object of art is works. In art, truth is the means to an end; in science, truth is the end.

The science of voice is a knowledge of certain phenomena or movements which are found under certain conditions to occur regularly. The object of the true art of voice is to study the conditions which allow these phenomena to occur.

The greatest mistake of the many systems of singing, formulated upon the theories of the scientists, and of the so-called scientists, was not so much in their being based upon theories which oftentimes were wrong, as in the misunderstanding and misapplication of true theories. The general mistake of these systems was and is that they attempt by direct local effort, by direct manipulation of muscle, to compel the phenomena of voice, in-

stead of studying the conditions which allow them to occur. In this way they attempt to do by direct control, that which Nature alone can do correctly.

While it is true that the vocal world owes much to science and the scientists, yet "the highest science can never fully explain the true phenomena of the voice, which are truly the phenomena of Nature." The phenomena of the voice no doubt interest the scientists from an anatomical standpoint, but these things are of little practical value to the singer. As someone has said, "To examine into the anatomical construction of the larynx, to watch it physiologically, and learn to understand the motions of the vocal cords in their relation to vocal sounds, is not much more than looking at the dial of a clock; the movements of the hands will give you no idea of the construction of the intricate works hidden behind the face of the clock."

We should never lose sight of the fact that there is a true science of voice, and that the art of song is based upon this science. The true art of song, however, is not so much a direct study of the physical or mechanical action of the parts, as it is a study of the spirituelle side; a study of the forces which move the parts automatically, in ac-

cordance with the laws of nature. In other words, voice, true voice, is more psychological than physiological; is more an expression of mind and soul than a physical expression or a physical force. It is true, the body is the medium through which the soul, the real man, gives expression to thought and feeling; and yet voice that is simply mechanical or physical is always common and meaningless and as a rule unmusical. The normal condition of true artistic voice is emotional and soulful.

ARTICLE THREE.

THE TWO PREVAILING SYSTEMS.

THE misunderstanding or the misapplication of any principle, theory or device, always leads to error. This was eminently true of the misunderstanding and misapplication on the part of many writers and teachers who based their systems upon the theories of the scientists and the self-styled scientists. The result is evident; it is that which is known as the local-effort, muscular school of the nineteenth century; the school which to this day so largely prevails; the school which makes of man a mere vocal machine, instead of a living, emotional, thinking soul.

The local-effort school attempts, by direct control and manipulation of muscle and of the vocal parts, to compel the phenomena of voice. In this respect it is unique; in this respect it stands alone. The truth of this statement becomes evident when we stop to consider that in nothing known which requires muscular development, as does the art of singing, is this development or training secured by

direct manipulation and control of muscle. There is nothing in the arts or sciences, nothing in the broad field of athletics or physical culture, nothing in the wide world that requires physical development, in which the attempt is made to develop by direct effort as does the local-effort school. Hence we say the mistake they make is in attempting to compel the phenomena of voice, instead of studying the conditions which allow them to occur. It might be interesting, it certainly would be very amusing, to enumerate and illustrate the many things done under the name of science, to compel the phenomena of voice; but space will not permit. Many of them are well known; many more are too ridiculous to consider except that they should be exposed for the good of the profession.

The result of all this direct manipulation of muscle is ugliness — everywhere hard, unmusical, unsympathetic voices. The public is so used to hearing hard, muscular voices that the demand for beautiful tone is not what it should be. In fact, it is not generally known that it is possible to make almost any voice more or less beautiful that is at all worth training. The hard, unmusical voice of the day is a hybrid, unnatural and altogether unnecessary voice. Physical effort in singing develops physical tone and physical effect.

Common tone makes common singing. A great artist must be great in tone as well as in interpretation.

The disciples of the local-effort school lose sight of the fact that when a muscle is set and rigid, either in attempting to hold the breath or to force the tone, it is virtually out of action; that instead of actually helping the voice it is really preventing a free, natural production, and that other parts are then compelled to do its work; this accounts for many ruined voices. "To make a part rigid is equal to the extirpation of such part. While it is in a state of rigidity it ceases to take part in any action whatsoever: it is inert and the same as if it had ceased to exist."

The local-effort school is accountable for many errors of the day. The incubus of this school is fastened upon the vocal profession with octopus-like tentacles which reach out in every direction, and which strive to strangle the truth in every possible way; but, while "life is short, art is long;" the truth must prevail.

As an outgrowth of the local-effort school, and as an attempt to counteract its evil tendencies, there is to-day in existence another school or system known as the limp or relaxed school, or the

system of complete relaxation. The object of this relaxation is to overcome muscular tension and rigidity. This is the other extreme. The followers of this school forget that there can be no tonicity without tension. Flexible firmness without rigidity, the result of flexible, vitalized position and action, is the only true condition. The tone of the school of relaxation is nearly always depressed and breathy; it always lacks vitality.

ARTICLE FOUR.

THE RENAISSANCE OF THE VOCAL ART.

We are in the habit of measuring time by days, weeks, months, years, decades and centuries. The world at large measures time by epochs and eras. While this is true in the physical world, it is equally true of the arts and sciences, and it is especially true of the art of song. Thus we have had the period known as "The Old Italian School of Singing." This was followed by the modern school, or "The Local-Effort School" of the nineteenth century, the period which may be called The Dark Ages of the Vocal Art.

There is a constant evolution in all things progressive, and this evolution is felt very perceptibly to-day in the vocal world. Great principles, great truths, are of slow growth, slow development. Times change, however, and we change with them. While the changes may be slow and almost imperceptible to the observer, they are sure, and finally become evident by the accumulation of event after event.

The prevailing systems of the nineteenth century tried to develop voice by direct local muscular effort. These systems have proved themselves failures. The vocal world is looking for and demanding something better. We may say that we are now on the eve of great events in the vocal art. When the morn comes, and the light breaks, we may confidently expect that awakening or reawakening which may properly be called The Renaissance of the Vocal Art.

This is the age of physical culture in all its forms. There is a tendency from the artificial habits of life, back, or rather one should say forward, to Nature and Nature's laws. "Athletes appreciate the value of physical training: brain-workers appreciate the value of mental training, of thinking before acting, and if you would become either you must follow the methods of both."

Many of our foremost educators in all branches of development, physical, mental and musical, are now making a bold stand for natural methods of education. However, all vocal training and development in the past, we are glad to say, has not been on the wrong side of the question.

There have been, at all ages and under all circumstances and conditions, men who have been at the root or the bottom of things, — men who have

preserved the truth in spite of their surroundings. So in the vocal art, there have been at every decade a few men who have known the truth, and who have handed it down through the dark ages of the vocal art. The work of these men has not been lost. Its influence has been felt, and is to-day more powerful than ever. Hence the trend of the best thought of the profession is away from the ideas of the local-effort school, away from rigidity and artificiality, and more in the direction of naturalness and common sense. I believe we are now, as a profession, slowly but surely awakening to truths which will grow, and which will in time bring to pass that which must come sooner or later, the new school of the twentieth century.

There is to-day that which is known as "The New Movement in the Vocal Art" — a movement based upon natural laws and common sense and opposed to the ideas of the local-effort school; — a movement in the direction of freedom of action, spontaneity and flexible strength as opposed to rigidity and direct effort; — a movement which advocates vitalized energy instead of muscular effort; — a movement which had its origin in the belief that no man ever learned to sing because he locally fixed or puckered his lips; because he held down his tongue with a spatulum or a spoon; because

he locally lowered or raised his soft palate; because he consciously moved or locally fixed his larynx; because he consciously, rigidly set or firmly pulled in one direction or another, his breathing muscles; because he carried an unnaturally high chest at the sacrifice of form, position and strength in every other way; because he sang with a stick or a pencil or a cork in his mouth; or because he did a hundred other unnatural things too foolish to mention. No man ever learned or ever will learn to sing because of these things. It is true he may have learned to sing in spite of them, which shows that Nature is kind; but as compared to the whole, he is one in a thousand.

"The New Movement" has come to stay. It will, of course, meet with bitter opposition. Why not? The custom of many has been, and is, to condemn without investigation; to condemn because it does not happen to be in the line of their teaching and study. Someone has said, "He who condemns without knowledge or investigation is dishonest."

"The New Movement" is simply a study of the conditions which allow the phenomena of voice to occur naturally and automatically. The day will come, when a right training of the voice will be recognized as a flexible, artistic, physical

training of the human body, and a consequent right use of the voice, as a soulful expression of the emotional nature. Matter or muscle will be taught to obey mind or will spontaneously. The thought before the effort, or rather before the action, will be the controlling influence, and vitalized emotional energy will be the true motor power of the voice. The elocutionists and the physical culturists understand this far better, as a rule, than the vocalists.

Abuse brings reform in art as well as in all other things. So the abuse of Nature's laws and the lack of common sense in the training of the singing voice has led, through a gradual evolution, to "The New Movement." This movement is the outgrowth of the best or advanced thought of the profession rebelling against unnatural methods.

In the fundamental principles of "The New Movement," there is nothing new claimed by its advocates. All is founded upon the science of voice, as are all true systems of teaching. The claims are made with regard to the devices used to study natural laws, to develop the God-given powers of the singer. Remember that Nature incarnates or reflects God's thoughts and desires and not man's ideas or inventions. Someone has said that there was nothing new, nor could there be anything

new, in the art of singing. There are many, alas! who talk and write as did this man. Is not this simply proof of the fact that ignorance cheapens and belittles that which wisdom views with awe and admiration? And this is true of nothing so much as it is of the arts and sciences.

Is, then, ours in all the world, the only profession based upon science and art that must stand still, that must accept blindly the traditions handed down to us, without investigation? Are we to feel and believe that with us progress is impossible, that we may not and cannot keep up with the spirit of the age? God forbid. Is it not true that "each age refutes much which a previous age believed, and all things human wax old and vanish away to make room for new developments, new ideals, new possibilities"? Is it possible this is true of all professions but ours? The signs of the times indicate differently. Hence we may confidently expect the Renaissance of the Vocal Art in this, the first half of the new century.

ARTICLE FIVE.

THE COMING SCHOOL, OR SYSTEM.

This is an age of progress; and, as we have said, many educators are making a bold stand for natural, common-sense methods. The trend of the higher thought of the vocal profession is away from artificiality, and in the direction of naturalness.

The coming school, or system, of the twentieth century will undoubtedly find its form, its power, its expressional and artistic force and value, its home, its life, in America. The old country is too much in the toils, too much in the ruts of tradition; hence natural forces are suppressed, and artificiality reigns supreme in the training of the voice. While this is not true in regard to the strictly æsthetic side of the question, it is painfully true as far as the fundamental principles of voice development are concerned. Of course we are glad to say there are bright and shining exceptions to this rule in all lands, but to the new country we must undoubtedly look for the new school.

So far the world has produced but two great teachers. The first of these is Nature; the second is Common Sense. Nature lays down the fundamental principles of voice; Common Sense formulates the devices for development according to these principles. Therefore we say, Go to Nature and learn of her, and use Common Sense in studying and developing her principles. The nearer the approach to Nature, the higher the art; hence the new school must be founded upon artistic laws which are Nature's laws, and not upon artificiality.

The coming school must teach the idealized tone. The ideal in its completeness means the truth, — all the truth, — and not, as many suppose, an exaggerated form of expression. The truth in tone, or the idealized tone, is beautiful and soulful, and demands for its production and use all the forces that Nature has given to the singer, — physical, mental, and emotional or spirituelle. Unmusical, muscular tone is not the true tone. It contains much that it should not have on the physical side, and lacks much that it should have on the spirituelle. As a rule, it means nothing; in fact, it is often simply a noise. The idealized tone always represents a thought, an idea, an emotion; it is the expression of the inner — the higher — man; it is, in reality, self-expression.

"The human voice is the most delicately attuned musical instrument that God has created. It is capable of a cultivation beyond the dreams of those who have given it no thought. It may be made to express every emotion in the gamut of human sensation, from abject misery to boundless ecstasy. It marks the man without his consent; it makes the man if he will but cultivate it."

The coming school must be founded upon freedom of form and action, upon flexible bodily movements, the result of vitalized energy instead of muscular effort. There must be no set, rigid, static condition of the muscles. Artistic singing is a form of self-expression; and self-expression, to be natural and beautiful, must be the result of correct position and action.

The first principle of artistic singing is the removal of all restraint. This is a fundamental law of Nature and cannot be changed. Under the influence of direct local muscular effort, the removal of all restraint is impossible. Hence the coming school must be based upon free flexible action. In this respect it will be much like the old Italian school, except that it will be as far in advance of the old school in the science of voice as the twentieth century is in advance of the eighteenth. It must also be far in advance of the old school in

the devices used to develop the fundamental principles of voice.

In this age of progress and knowledge of laws and facts, the new school, under the influence of Nature's laws and common sense, with the aid of flexible movements and vitalized energy, must do as much for the development of the singing voice in three or four years as the old school was able to do in eight or ten. This is necessary, both because the singing world demands it, and Nature and common sense teach us that it does not take years and years of hard study and practice simply to develop the voice. From a strictly musical standpoint, however, it does take years to ripen a great singer, to make a great artist. Many voices are ruined musically by years of hard, muscular practice. Hence we say the new school must give the voice freedom, and remove all muscular restraint by or through natural, common-sense, vitalized movements.

ARTICLE SIX.

CONDITIONS.

NATURE'S laws are God's laws. All nature, the universe itself, is an expression of God's thoughts or desires in accordance with His laws. This one controlling force, this principle of law, is at the bottom of everything in nature and art. Everything which man says or does under normal, free conditions, is self-expression, an expression of his inner nature; but this expression must be under the law. If not, the expression is unnatural and therefore artificial. This principle, which holds true in all of man's expression, in all art, is in nothing more evident than in the use of the singing voice.

"Nature does nothing for man except what she enables him to do for himself." Nature gives him much, but never compels him to use what she gives. Man is a free agent. He can obey or violate the laws of Nature at will; but he cannot violate Nature's laws, and not pay the penalty. This thought or principle constantly stands out as

a warning to the vocal world. The student of the voice who violates Nature's laws must not expect to escape the penalty, which is hard, harsh, unmusical tone or ruined voice. Nature demands certain conditions in order to produce beautiful, artistic tone. If the student of the voice desires to develop beautiful, artistic tone he is compelled to study the conditions, the fundamental principles under the law; and this can be done only by the use of common-sense methods.

All artistic tone is the result of certain conditions, conditions demanded by Nature and not man's ideas or fancies. These conditions are dependent upon form and adjustment, or we might better say adjustment and form, as form is the result of the adjustment of the parts. So far all writers on the voice, and all teachers, agree; but here comes the parting of the ways. One man attempts form and adjustment by locally influencing the parts, — the tongue, the lips, the soft palate, the larynx, etc. This results in muscular singing and artificiality. We have found that form and adjustment, to be right, must be automatic. This condition cannot be secured by any system of direct local effort, but must be the result of flexible, vitalized bodily movements — movements which arouse and develop all the true conditions of

tone; movements which allow the voice to sing spontaneously.

The fundamental conditions of singing demanded by Nature we find are as follows:

Natural or automatic adjustment of the organ of sound, and of all the parts.

Approximation of the breath bands.

Inflation of all the cavities.

Non-interference above the organ of sound.

Automatic breath-control.

Freedom of form and action of all the parts above the larynx.

High placing and low resonance.

Automatic articulation.

Mental and emotional vitality or energy.

Free, flexible, vitalized bodily position and action.

It is not my intention here to enlarge upon these conditions to any extent. I have already done so in my last book, "Position and Action in Singing." I know many writers on the voice, and many teachers, do not agree with me on this subject of conditions; but facts are stubborn things, and "A physical fact is as sacred as a moral principle." "The sources of all phenomena, the sources of all life, intelligence and love, are to be sought in the internal — the spiritual realm; not in the external

or material." "A man is considerably out of date who says he does not believe a thing, simply because he cannot do that thing or does not understand how the thing is done. There are three classes of people — the 'wills,' the 'won'ts,' and the 'can'ts': the first accomplish everything, the second oppose everything, and the third fail in everything." These things [these conditions] can be understood and fully appreciated by investigation only. There is no absolute definite knowledge in this world except that gained from experience.

The voice in correct use is always tuned like an instrument. This must be in order to have resonance and freedom, and this is done only through natural or automatic adjustment of all the parts. In singing there are always two forces in action, pressure and resistance, or motor power and control. In order to have automatic adjustment these two forces must prevail. When the organ of sound is automatically adjusted, the breath bands approximate: This gives the true resisting or controlling force. When the breath bands approximate we have inflation of the ventricles of the larynx, the most important of all the resonance cavities, for when this condition prevails we have freedom of tone, and the inflation of all other cavities. And not only this; it also enables us to

remove all restraint or interference from the parts above the larynx, and especially from the intrinsic and extrinsic muscles of the throat. This automatic adjustment, approximation of the breath bands and inflation of the ventricles, gives us a yet more important condition, namely, automatic breath control; this is beyond question the most important of all problems solved for the singer through this system of flexible vitalized movements.

The removal of all interference or direct local control of the parts above the larynx, gives absolute freedom of form and action; and when the form and action are free, articulation becomes automatic and spontaneous. When all restraint is thus removed, the air current comes to the front, and we secure the important condition of high placing. Furthermore, under these conditions, when the air current strikes the roof of the mouth freely, it is reflected into the inflated cavities, and there is heard and felt, through sympathetic vibration of the air in the cavities, added resonance or the wonderful reinforcing power of inflation: in this way is secured not only the added resonance of all other cavities, but especially the resonance of the chest, the greatest of all resonance or reinforcing powers.

When the voice is thus freed under true condi-

tions, it is possible to arouse easily and quickly the mental and emotional power and vitality of the singer. In this way is aroused that which I have called the singer's sensation, or, for want of a better name, the third power of the voice. This power is not a mere fancy. It is not imagination; for it is absolutely necessary to the complete mental and emotional expression of the singer, to the development of all his powers. This life or vital force is to the singer a definite, controllable power. "Various terms have been applied to this mysterious force. Plato called it 'the soul of the world.' Others called it the 'plastic spirit of the world,' while Descartes gave it the afterward popular name of 'animal spirits.' The Stoics called it simply 'nature,' which is now generally changed to 'nervous principle.'" "The far-reaching results of so quiet and yet so tremendous a force may be seen in the lives of the men and women who have the mental acumen to understand what is meant by it." The singer who has developed and controlled "the third power" through the true conditions of voice, never doubts its reality; and he, and he only, is able to fully appreciate it.

The development of all the above conditions depends upon one important thing, the education of the body; upon a free, flexible, vitalized body.

ARTICLE SEVEN.

THE INFLUENCE OF RIGHT BODILY ACTION.

In art, as in all things else, man must be under the law until he becomes a law unto himself. In other words, he must study his technique, his nethod, his art, until all becomes a part of himself, becomes, as it were, second nature. There is a wide difference between art and artificiality. True art is based upon Nature's laws. Artificiality, in almost every instance, is a violation of Nature's laws, and at best is but a poor imitation.

The impression prevails that art is something far off, something that is within the grasp of the favored few only. We say of a man, he is a genius, and we bow down to him accordingly. The genius is an artist by the grace of God and his own efforts. Nature has given some men the power to easily and quickly grasp and understand things which pertain to art, but if such men do not apply their understanding they never become great or useful artists. Talent is the ability to study and apply, and is of a little lower order than genius; but the genius of application, and the talent to apply that

which is learned, have made the great and useful men, the great artists of the world. As someone has said, "Art is not a thing separate and apart; art is only the best way of doing things;" and while this is true of all the arts, it is eminently so of the art of voice and of song.

Artistic tone, as we have found, is the result of certain conditions demanded by Nature. These conditions are dependent upon form and adjustment; and form and adjustment, to be right, must be automatic. All writers and teachers agree that correct tone is the result of form and adjustment; but here, as we have said, comes the parting of the ways. One man attempts, by directly controlling and adjusting the parts, to do that which nature alone can do correctly; result — hard, muscular tone. Another attempts, by relaxation, to secure the conditions of tone; result — vocal depression, or depressed, relaxed tone.

If artistic tone be the result of conditions due to form and adjustment, and if form and adjustment, to be right, must be automatic, if these things are true, and they are as true as the fact that the world moves, then there is only one way under heaven by which it is possible to secure these conditions; that way is through a flexible, vitalized body, through flexible bodily position and action.

The rigid, muscular school cannot secure these conditions, for they make flexible freedom impossible. The limp, relaxed school cannot secure them, for there is no tone without tonicity and vitality of muscle. Vitalized energy *can* secure these true conditions, but through flexible bodily position and action only.

The rigid school is muscle-bound, and lacks life and vitality. The limp school, of course, is depressed and lacks energy. The world is full of dead singers, — dead so far as vitality and emotional energy are concerned. Singing is a form of emotional or self-expression, and requires life and vitality. Life is action. Life is vital force aroused. Life in singing is emotional energy. Life is a God-given, eternal condition, and is a fundamental principle of the true art of song.

It is wonderfully strange that this idea or principle of flexible, vitalized bodily position and action is not better understood by the vocal profession. That a right use or training of the body, automatically influences form and adjustment, and secures right conditions of tone, has been and is being demonstrated day by day. This is a revelation to many who have tried to sing by the rigid or limp methods. There is really nothing new claimed for it, for it is as old as the hills. Truth is eternal,

and yet a great truth may be lost to the world for a time. The only things new which we claim, are the movements and the simple and effective devices used to study and apply them. These movements have a wonderful influence on the voice, for the simple reason that they are based upon Nature's laws and common sense. These truths are destined to influence, sooner or later, the entire vocal world.

A great truth cannot always be suppressed, and some day someone will present these truths in a way that will compel their recognition. They are never doubted now by those who understand them, and they are appreciated by such to a degree of enthusiasm. I am well aware that when these movements are spoken of in the presence of the followers of the prevailing rigid or limp schools, they exclaim, "Why, we do the same thing. We use the body too." Of course they use the body, but it is by no means the same. Their use of the body is often abuse, and not only of the body, but of the voice as well.

The influence on the singing voice of a rightly used or rightly trained body is almost beyond the ability of man to put in words.

All singing should be rhythmical. These flexible bodily movements develop rhythm.

All singing should be the result of vitalized energy and never of muscular effort. These movements arouse energy and make direct effort unnecessary.

Singing should be restful, should be the result of power in repose or under control. These movements, and these movements alone, make such conditions possible.

All singing should be idealized, should be the result of self-expression, of an expression of the emotions. This is impossible except through correct bodily action. "By nature the expression of man is his voice, and the whole body through the agency of that invisible force, sound, expresses the nobility, dignity, and intellectual emotions, from the foot to the head, when properly produced and balanced. Nothing short of the whole body can express this force perfectly in man or woman."

These movements develop in a common-sense way the power of natural forces, of all the forces which Nature has given to man for the production and use of the voice. Rigid, set muscles, or relaxed, limp muscles dwarf and limit in every way the powers of the singer, physical, mental, and emotional; the physical action is wrong, the thought is wrong, and the expression is wrong. A trained, developed muscle responds to thought, to

right thought, in a free, natural mannner. A rigid or limp muscle is, in a certain sense, for the time being, actually out of use.

An important point to consider in this connection is the fact that there is no strength properly applied without movement; but when right movements are not used, the voice is pushed and forced by local effort and by contraction of the lung cells and of the throat. This of course means physical restraint, and physical restraint prevents self-expression. Singing is more psychological than physiological; hence the importance of free self-expression. Direct physical effort produces physical effect; relaxation produces depression.

All artistic tone is reinforced sound. There are two ways of reinforcing tone. First, by direct muscular effort, the wrong way; second, by expansion and inflation, the added resonance of air in the cavities, the right way. This condition of expansion and inflation is the distinguishing feature of many great voices, and is possible only through right bodily position and action. These movements are used by many great artists, who develop them as they themselves develop, through giving expression to thought, feeling, and emotion, through using the impressive, persuasive tone, the fervent voice. This brings into action the entire vocal

mechanism, in fact all the powers of the singer; hence these movements become a part of the great artist. He may not be able to give a reason for them, but he knows their value. The persuasive, fervent voice demands spontaneity and automatic form and adjustment; these conditions are impossible without flexible, vitalized movements. The great artist finds by experience that the throat was made to sing and not to sing with; that he must sing from the body through the throat. He finds that the tone must be allowed and not made to sing. Hence in the most natural way he develops vitalized bodily energy.

Next in importance to absolute freedom of voice, which these movements give, is the fact that through them absolute, automatic, perfect breath-control is developed and mastered. These movements give the breath without a thought of breathing, for they are all breathing movements. The singer cannot lift and expand without filling the lungs naturally and automatically, unless he purposely resists the breath. The conscious breath unseats the voice, that is, disturbs or prevents correct adjustment, and thus compels him to consciously hold it; but this very act makes it impossible to give the voice freedom. Through these movements, through correct position, we secure

automatic adjustment, which means approximation of the breath bands, the principle of the double valve in the throat, which secures automatic breath-control. In other words, the singer whose position and action are correct need never give his breathing a thought. This is considered by many as the greatest problem — for the singer — solved in the nineteenth century.

To study and master these movements and apply them practically, the singer needs to know absolutely nothing of the mechanism of his vocal organs. He need not consider at all the physiological side of the question. Of course the study of these movements must at first be more or less mechanical, until they respond automatically to thought or will. Then they are controlled mentally, the thought before the action, as should be the case in all singing; and finally the whole mechanism, or all movements, respond naturally and freely to emotional or self-expression.

These flexible, vitalized movements are not generally understood or used, because they have not been in the line of thought or study of the rigid muscular school or the limp relaxed school; and yet they are destined to influence sooner or later all systems of singing. They have been used more or less in all ages by great artists. It is strange

that they are not better understood by the profession.

* * * * *

In this connection it might be well to speak of the importance of physical culture for the singer. A series of simple but effective exercises should be used, exercises that will develop and vitalize every muscle of the body. There are also nerve calisthenics, nervo-muscular movements, which strengthen and control the nervous system. These nerve calisthenics generate electrical vitality and give life and confidence. "The body by certain exercises and régime may be educated to draw a constantly increasing amount of vitality from growing nature."

A singer to be successful must be healthy and strong. He should take plenty of out-door exercise. Exercise, fresh air, and sunlight are the three great physicians of the world. But beside this, all singers need physical training and development, which tense and harden the muscles, and increase the lung capacity; that training which expands all the resonance cavities, especially the chest, and which directly develops and strengthens the vocal muscles themselves, particularly the extrinsic and intrinsic muscles of the throat. As we have learned, a trained muscle responds more spontane-

ously to thought or will than an uneducated one; flexible spontaneity the singer always needs. Beyond a doubt, the singer who takes a simple but effective course of physical training in connection with vocal training will accomplish twice as much in a given time, in regard to tone, power and control, as he could possibly do with the vocal training alone. This is the day of physical training, of physical culture in all things; and the average vocal teacher will have to awake to the fact that his pupils need it as much as, or more than, they need the constant practice of tone.

Of course it is not possible to give a system of physical training in a small work like this. The student of the voice can get physical training and physical culture from many teachers and many books. It may not be training that will so directly and definitely develop and strengthen the vocal muscles and the organ of sound itself, or training that will so directly influence the voice as does our system, which is especially arranged for the singer; but any good system of physical development, any system that gives the student health and strength, is good for the singing voice. "Activity is the source of growth, both physical and mental." "Strength to be developed, must be used. Strength to be retained, must be used."

RAISON D'ÊTRE.

Since writing my last book, "Position and Action in Singing," and after four or five years more of experience, I have been doubly impressed and more than convinced of the power and influence of certain things necessary to a right training and use of the voice. Herbert Spencer says, "Experience is the sole origin of knowledge;" and my experience has convinced me, not only that certain things are necessary in the training of the voice, but that certain of the most important principles or conditions demanded by Nature, are entirely wanting in most systems of singing.

Singers, as a rule, are artificial and unnatural. They do not use all the powers with which Nature has endowed them. This has been most forcibly impressed upon my mind by the general lack of vitality, or vital energy, among singers; by a general lack of physical vitality, and, I venture to say, largely of mental vitality, and undoubtedly of emotional vitality, often, but mistakenly, called temperament. These things have been forced upon me by the general condition of depression which pre-

vails. Vitality, however, or vitalized energy, is in fact the true means or device whereby the singer is enabled to arouse his temperament, be it great or otherwise; to arouse it, to use it, and to make it felt easily and naturally.

Out of every hundred voices tried I am safe in saying that at least ninety are physically depressed, are physically below the standard of artistic singing. Singing, it is true, is more mental than physical, and more emotional than mental; but a right physical condition is absolutely necessary, and the development of it depends upon the way the pupil is taught to think. Singing is a form of self-expression, of an expression of the emotions. This is impossible when there is physical depression. The singer must put himself and keep himself upon a level with the tone and upon a level with his song, the atmosphere of his song; upon a level with the sentiment to be expressed, physically, mentally and emotionally This cannot be done, or these conditions cannot prevail, when there is depression.

There is, to my mind, but one way to account for this condition of depression among singers. That is, the way they think, or are taught to think, in regard to the use of their bodies in singing. The way in which they breathe and control the

breath, the way in which they drive and control the tone. It is the result of rigid muscular effort or relaxation, and both depress not only the voice but the singer as well. The tonal result is indisputable evidence of this.

Knowledge comes through experience; and my experience in studying both sides of this question has convinced me that there is but one way to develop physical, mental and emotional vitality in the singer, and that is through some system of flexible, vitalized bodily movements. There must be flexible firmness, firmness without rigidity. The movements as given in my book, "Position and Action in Singing," and as here given, develop these conditions. They give the singer physical vitality, freedom of voice, spontaneity, absolute automatic breath control, and make self-expression, emotional expression, and tone-color, not only possible but comparatively easy. Singing is self-expression, an expression of thought and feeling. There must be a medium, however, for the expression of feeling aroused through thought; that medium is the body and the body alone. Therefore it is easy to see the importance of so training the body that it will respond automatically to the thought and will of the singer.

The opposite of depression, which local effort

develops, is vitalized energy, the singer's sensation, that which I have called the third power, and which is a revelation to those who have studied both sides of the question. These things, as I have said, have been given to the vocal world in my book, "Position and Action in Singing." Many have understood them, have used them, and are enthusiastic advocates of the idea. Others have not fully understood them, as was and is to be expected. For that reason I have written this little book in the hope that it might make things plainer to all. I have endeavored to embody these practical, natural, necessary movoments in the formula of study given in this book.

The formula which follows is systematically and logically arranged for the study and development of fundamental principles through or by the means of these flexible vitalized movements. In this way I hope to make these ideas plainer and more definite to pupil and teacher.

Every correct system of voice-training is based upon principle, theory, and the devices used to develop the principles. There are certain fundamental principles of voice, which are Nature's laws laid down to man, and which cannot be violated. Upon these principles we formulate theories. The theories may be right or wrong, as they are but

the works of man. If they are right, the devices used are more apt to be right. If they are wrong, wrong effort is sure to follow, and the result is disastrous.

After all, the most important question for consideration is that of the devices used to develop and train the voice. All depends upon whether the writer, the teacher, and the pupil study Nature's laws through common-sense methods or resort to artificiality. If the devices used are right, if they develop vitality, emotional energy, if they avoid rigidity and depression, then the singer need not know so much about principle and theory. But with the teacher it is different. He must know what to think and how to think it before he can intelligently impart the ideas to his pupils. Hence a system based upon correct principle, theory, and device is absolutely necessary for the teacher who hopes to succeed.

The following system, as formulated, is largely the outgrowth of my summer work at Point Chautauqua, on Lake Chautauqua. There we have a school every summer, not only for the professional singer and teacher, but for those who desire to become such. Beside the private lessons we give a practical normal course in class lessons. There the principles, the theory, and the devices

used are studied and worked out in a practical way by lecture, by illustration, and by the study of all kinds of voices. Many who have taught for years have there obtained for the first time an idea, the true idea, of flexible vitalized movements, the devices demanded by nature for giving the voice vitality, freedom, ease, etc. These teachers who are thus aroused become the most enthusiastic supporters of, and believers in, our system of flexible vitalized movements.

It is, therefore, through the Chautauqua work that I have been impressed with the importance of placing this system in a plainer and more definite way, if possible, before the vocal world.

Part Second.

VITALITY.

ARTICLE ONE.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE OF ARTISTIC TONE-PRODUCTION.

THE first principle of artistic tone-production is

The Removal of All Restraint.

The theory founded upon this principle is as follows: Correct tone is the result of certain conditions demanded by Nature, not man's ideas. These conditions are dependent upon form and adjustment; and form and adjustment, to be right, must be automatic, and not the result of direct or local effort.

The devices used for developing the above conditions are simple vocal exercises which are favorable to correct form and adjustment, and are studied and made to influence the voice through correct position and action.

A correct system for training and developing the voice must be based upon principle, theory, and device; upon the principles of voice which are Nature's laws, upon the theories based upon these

principles, and upon the devices for the study and development of such principles.

My purpose in this little work is to give just enough musical figures or exercises to enable us to study and apply the movements, the practical part of our system.

The first principle of artistic tone-production is the removal of all restraint. This no one can deny without stultifying himself. The removal of all restraint means absolute freedom, not only of form and action, but of tone. It is evident, then, that any local hardening or contracting of muscle, any tension or contraction which would prevent elasticity, would make the removal of all restraint impossible. Hence we find that this first principle is an impossibility with the rigid local-effort school. On the other hand, relaxation, while it may remove restraint, makes artistic control and tonicity impossible. Hence artistic tone, based upon this first principle, is an impossible condition with the limp or relaxed school.

That tone is the result of certain conditions demanded by Nature, and that these conditions are dependent upon form and adjustment, cannot be denied; but unless form and adjustment give freedom to the voice, unless they result in the removal of all restraint, then the manner or

method in which they are secured must surely be wrong. Local effort or contraction cannot do this. Relaxation cannot secure the true conditions. There is and can be but one principle which makes true form and adjustment possible: All form and adjustment must be automatic, and not the result of direct or local effort.

This brings us to a study of devices; and devices, to influence correctly not only the voice but the individual, must be in accordance with natural and not artificial conditions. The singer must put himself and keep himself upon a level with the tone — upon a level with the tone physically, mentally and emotionally. The device which we use, or the formula, is, *lift, expand, and let go.*

With the singer who contracts the throat muscles during the act of singing, that which may be called the center of gravity or of effort is at the throat. With the singer who carries a consciously high chest and a drawn-in or contracted diaphragm, the center of gravity is at the chest. With the singer who takes a conscious full breath, and hardens and sets the diaphragm to hold it, the center of gravity is at the diaphragm. In none of these cases is it possible to remove all restraint; for they all result in contraction, especially of the throat muscles, and make flexible

expansion — a condition necessary to absolute freedom — impossible.

Place the center of gravity, by thought and action, at the hips. Everything above the hips must be free, flexible, elastic and vitalized when singing. We say, *lift, expand, and let go*, which must be in the following proportion: Lift a little, expand more than you lift, and let go entirely. The lift is from the hips up, and must be done in a free, flexible manner, with a constant study to make the body lighter and lighter, and the movement more elastic and flexible. Do not lift as though lifting a weight, but lift lightly as though in response to thought or suggestion.

Expand the entire body in a flexible, elastic manner. This will bring into action every muscle of the body, and apply strength and support to the voice; for, as we have found, there is no strength correctly applied except through right movement. When we lift and expand properly, we expand the body as a whole, and not the chest alone, nor the diaphragm, nor the sides. These all come into action and expand with proper movement; but there must be no conscious thought of, nor conscious local effort of, any particular part of the body. When we lift and expand properly the chest becomes active, the diaphragm goes into a

singing position, and every muscle of the body is on the alert and ready to respond to the thought or desire of the singer. Not only this; when we lift and expand properly, we influence directly the form and adjustment of all the vocal muscles, and especially the organ of sound itself. In this way the voice is actually and artistically tuned for the production of correct tone, as is the violin in the hands of the master before playing.

Lift, expand, and let go. This brings us to a consideration of the third part of this expression, *let go.* This is in some respects the most important of the three; for unless the singer knows how to let go properly, absolute freedom or the removal of all restraint is impossible, and the true conditions of tone are lacking. The *let go* does not mean relaxation, for there must be flexible firmness without rigidity. With the beginner the tendency is to lift, expand, and harden or contract all the muscles. This, of course, means restraint. The correct idea of *let go* may be studied and better understood by the following experiment or illustration.

Stand with the right arm hanging limp by the side. Lift it to a horizontal position, the back of the hand upward. While lifting, grip and contract every muscle of the arm and hand out to the

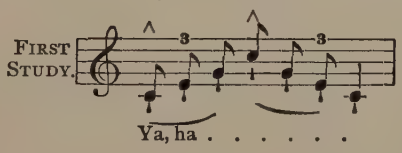
finger-tips. This is much like the contraction placed upon the muscles of the body and of the throat by the conscious-breathing, local-effort school. Lift the arm again from the side, and in lifting have the thought or sensation of letting go all contraction of the muscles. Make the arm light and flexible, and use just enough strength to lift it, and hold it in a horizontal position. This should be the condition of all the muscles of the body under the influence of correct, *lift, expand, and let go*. Lift the arm the third time without contraction or with the sensation of letting go, hold it in a horizontal position, the back of the hand upward. Now will to devitalize the entire hand from the wrist to the finger-tips. Let the hand drop or droop, the arm remaining in a horizontal position. This condition of the hand is the *let go*, or the condition of devitalization, which should be upon the muscles of the face, the mouth, the tongue, the jaw, and the extrinsic muscles of the throat during the act of singing.

Thus, when we say, *lift, expand, and let go*, we mean lift from the hips, the center of gravity, in an easy, flexible manner; expand the body with a free movement without conscious thought of any part of it; have the sensation of letting go all contraction or rigidity, and absolutely release the

muscles of the throat and face. The *let go* is in reality more a negative than a positive condition, and virtually means, when you lift and expand, do not locally grip, harden, or set any muscle of the body, throat, or face.

The *lift, expand, and let go* must be in proportion to the pitch and power of the tone. This, if done properly, will result in automatic form and adjustment, the removal of all restraint, and open, free throat and voice. This is the only way in which it is possible to truly vitalize, to arouse the physical, mental and emotional powers of the singer. This is the only way in which it is possible to put yourself and keep yourself upon a level with the tone — upon a level, physically, mentally and emotionally. This is in truth and in fact the singer's true position and true condition; this is in truth and in fact self-assertion; and this, and this only, makes it possible to easily and naturally *arouse* "the singer's sensation," the true sensation of artistic singing.

We will take for our first study a simple arpeggio, using the syllables Ya ha, thus:



We use Ya on the first tone, because when sung freely it helps to place the tone well forward. Ya is pronounced as the German *Ja*. We use ha on all other tones of this study for the reason that it is the natural staccato of the voice. Think it and sing it "in glossic" or phonetically, thus: hA, very little h but full, inflated, expanded A. A full explanation for the use of Ya and ha may be found in "Position and Action in Singing," page 117. All the studies given in this little work for the illustration and study of the movements of our system should be sung on all keys as high and as low as they can be used without effort and without strain.

It has been said that "the production of the human voice is the effect of a muscular effort born of a mental cause." Therefore it is important to know what to think and how to think it.

We say, put yourself and keep yourself constantly upon a level with the tone, mentally, physically and emotionally. For the present we have to do with the mental and physical only.

Stand in an easy, natural manner, the hands and arms hanging loosely by the sides. You desire to sing the above exercise. Turn the palms of the hands up in a free, flexible manner, and lift the hands up and out a little, not high, not above

the waist line. When moving the hands up and out, move the body from the hips up and out in exactly the same manner and proportion. The hands and arms must not move faster than the body; the body must move rhythmically with the arms. This rhythmical movement of body and arms is highly important. In moving, the sensation is as though the body were lifted lightly and freely upon the palms of the hands. The hands say to the body, "Follow us." In this way, *lift expand, and let go.* Do not raise the shoulders locally. The movement is from the hips up. The entire body expands easily and freely by letting go all contraction of muscle. Do not first lift, and after lifting expand, and then finally try to let go, as is the habit of many; but lift, and when lifting expand, and when lifting and expanding let go as directed. Three thoughts in one movement — three movements in one — lifting, expanding, and letting go simultaneously as one movement, which in fact it must finally become. This is the only way in which it is possible to secure all true conditions of tone.

With this thought in mind, and having tried the movement without singing, sing the above exercise. Start from repose, as described, and by using the hands and body in a free, flexible man-

ner, move to what you might think should be the level of the first tone. Just when you reach the level of the first tone let the voice sing. Move up with the arpeggio to the highest note, using hands, body, and voice with free, flexible action; then move body and hands with the voice down to the lowest note of the arpeggio; when the last tone is sung go into a position of repose.

The movement from repose to the level of the first tone is highly important, for the reason that it arouses the energies of the singer, and secures all true conditions through automatic form and adjustment. Do not hesitate, do not hurry. All movement must be rhythmical and spontaneous, and never the result of effort. In singing the arpeggio the tones of the voice must be strictly staccato; but the movement of the hands and body must be very smooth, even, and continuous — no short, jerky movements.

The movement of the body is very slight, and at no time, in studying these first exercises, should the hands be raised above the level of the hips or of the waist line. Of course with beginners these movements may be more or less exaggerated. When singing songs, however, they do not show, at least not nearly as much as wrong breathing and wrong effort. They simply give the singer

the appearance of proper dignity, position, and self-assertion. By all means use the hands in training the movements of the body. You can train the body by the use of the hands in one-fourth of the time that it is possible to do it without using them. Be careful, however, not to raise the hands too high, as is the tendency; when lifted too high the energy is often put into the hands and arms instead of the body; in this way the body is not properly aroused and influenced, and of course true conditions are not secured.

"Practical rules must rest upon theory, and theory upon nature, and nature is ascertained by observation and experience." Now, if you will practice this arpeggio with a free, flexible movement of hands and body, getting under the tone, as it were, and moving to a level of every tone, you will soon find by practice and experience that these movements are perfectly natural, that they arouse all the forces which nature gave us for the production of tone, that they vitalize the singer and give freedom to the voice. By moving properly to a level of the first tone you secure all true conditions of tone; and if you have placed yourself properly upon a level with the high tone, when that is reached you will have maintained those true conditions — you will have freedom,

inflation and vitality instead of contraction and strain.

By moving with the voice in this flexible manner we bring every part of the body into action, and apply strength as nature demands it, without effort or strain. Remember, there is no strength properly applied in singing without movement. In this way the voice is an outward manifestation of an inward feeling or emotion. "The voice is your inner or higher self, expressed not *at* or *by* but *through* the vocal organs, aided by the whole body as a sound-board."

Our next study will be a simple arpeggio sung with the *la* sound, thus :

This movement, of course, must be sung with the same action of hands and body, starting from repose to the level of the first tone, and keeping constantly upon a level with the voice by ascending and descending. Sing this exercise first semi staccato, afterwards legato.

The special object of this exercise is to relax the jaw, the face, and the throat muscles. A stiff,

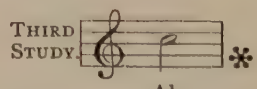
set jaw always means throat contraction. In this exercise, if sung in every other respect according to directions, a stiff jaw would defeat the whole thing, and make impossible a correct production of every high tone.

In singing the *la* sound, the tip of the tongue touches the roof of the mouth, just back of the upper front teeth. Think the tone forward at this point, and let the jaw rise and fall with the tongue. Devitalize the jaw and the muscles of the face, move up in a free, flexible manner to the level of every tone, and you will be surprised at the freedom and ease with which the high tones come. The moving up in the proper way applies strength, and secures automatic form and adjustment; develops or strengthens the resisting or controlling muscles of the voice; in fact, gives the voice expansion, inflation, and tonicity.

Remember that one can act in singing; and by acting I mean the movements as here described, lifting, expanding, etc., without influencing the voice or the tone, without applying the movements to the voice; of course such action is simply an imitation of the real thing. Herein, however, lies the importance of correct thinking. The thought must precede the action. The singer must have some idea of what he wants to sing and how he

wants to sing it. A simple chance, a simple hit or miss idea, will not do. Make your tone mean something. Arouse the singer's sensation, and you can soon tell whether the movement is influencing the tone or not. Of course these movements are all more easily applied on the middle and low tones than on the higher tones, but these are the great successful movements for the study and development of the high tones.

As we have learned in our former publications, there are but three movements in singing, — ascending, descending, and level movements. We have so far studied ascending and descending movements or arpeggios. We will now study level movements on a single tone, thus :



Place yourself in a free, flexible manner upon a level with the tone by the use of the movements as before described ; lift, expand, and let go without hurrying or without hesitation, and just when you reach that which you feel to be the level of the tone let the voice sing. All must be done in a moment, rhythmically and without local effort. Sing spontaneously, sing with abandon, trust the

movements. They will always serve you if you trust them. If you doubt them, they are doubtful; for your very doubt brings hesitation, and hesitation brings contraction. Sing from center to circumference, with the thought of expansion and inflation, and not from outside to center. The first gives freedom and fullness of form, the latter results in local effort and contraction. The first sends the voice out full and free, the latter restrains it. Expansion through flexible movement is the important point to consider. When the tone is thus sung, it should result in the removal of all restraint, especially from the face, jaw, and throat. In this way the tone will come freely to the front, and will flow or float as long as the level of the tone is maintained without effort.

Remember the most important point is the movement from repose to the level of the tone. If this is done according to directions, all restraint will be removed and all true conditions will prevail. Never influence form. Let form and adjustment be automatic, the result of right thought, position, and action. Study to constantly make these movements of the body easier and more natural. Take off all effort. Do not work hard. It is not hard work. It is play. It is a delight when properly done. Make no conscious,

direct effort of any part of the body. Never exaggerate the movement or action of one part of the body at the sacrifice of the true position of another. The tendency is to locally raise the chest so high that the abdomen is unnaturally drawn in. This, of course, is the result of local effort, and is not the intention of the movements. The center of gravity must be at the hips; and all movement above that must be free, flexible, and uniform. [1]

Do not give a thought to any wrong thing you may be in the habit of doing in singing, but place your mind upon freeing the voice, upon the removal of all restraint through these flexible vitalized movements: think the ideal tone and sing. When the right begins to come through these movements the wrong must go. Over and against every wrong there is a right. We remove the wrong by developing the right. Sing in a free, flexible manner, the natural power of the voice. Make no effort to suppress the tone or increase its power. After the movements are understood and all restraint is removed, then study the tone on all degrees of power, but remember when singing soft and loud, and especially loud, that the first principle of artistic singing is the removal of all restraint.

[1] In this connection, see Supplementary Note, page 135.

ARTICLE TWO.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE OF ARTISTIC TONE-PRODUCTION.

THE second principle of artistic tone-production is

Automatic Breathing and Automatic Breath-Control.

Theory. — The singing breath should be as unconscious, — or, rather, as sub-conscious, — as involuntary, as the vital or living breath. It should be the result of flexible action, and never of local muscular effort. The muscular breath compels muscular control; hence throat contraction. The nervous breath, nervous control; hence relaxation and loss of breath.

Devices. — *Expand to breathe. Do not breathe to expand.* Expand by flexible, vitalized movements; control by position the level of the tone, and thus balance the two forces, "pressure and resistance." In this way is secured automatic adjustment and absolute automatic breath-control.

More has probably been written and said upon this important question of breathing in singing than upon any other question in the broad field of the vocal art; and yet the fact remains that it is less understood than any of the really great principles of correct singing. This is due to the fact that most writers, teachers, and singers believe that they must do something — something out of the ordinary — to develop the breathing powers. The result is, that most systems of breathing are artificial; therefore unnatural. Most systems of breathing attempt to do by direct effort that which Nature alone can do correctly. Most breathing in singing is the result of direct conscious effort.

The conscious or artificial breath is a muscular breath, and compels muscular control. The conscious breath — the breath that is taken locally and deliberately (one might almost say maliciously) before singing — expands the body unnaturally, and thus creates a desire to at once expel it. In order to avoid this, the singer is compelled to harden and tighten every muscle of the body; and not only of the body, but of the throat as well. Under these conditions the first principle of artistic tone-production — the removal of all restraint — is impossible.

As the breath is taken, so must it be used. Nature demands — aye, compels — this. If we take (as we are so often told to do) "a good breath, and get ready," it means entirely too much breath for comfort, to say nothing of artistic singing. It means a hard, set diaphragm, an undue tension of the abdominal muscles, and an unnatural position and condition of the chest. This of course compels the hardening and contraction of the throat muscles. This virtually means the unseating of the voice; for under these conditions free, natural singing is impossible. The conscious, full, muscular breath compels conscious, local muscular effort to hold it and control it. Result: a stiff, set, condition of the face muscles, the jaw, the tongue and the larynx. This makes automatic vowel form, placing, and even freedom of expression, impossible. The conscious, artificial breath is a handicap in every way. It compels the singer to directly and locally control the parts. In this way it is not possible to easily and freely use all the forces which Nature has given to man for the production of beautiful tone.

Now note the contrast. The artistic breath must be as unconscious or as involuntary as the vital or living breath. It must be the result of free, flexible action, and never of conscious effort.

The artistic, automatic breath is the result of doing the thing which gives the breath and controls the breath without thought of breath. The automatic breath is got through the movements suggested when we say, *Lift, expand, and let go.*

When the singer lifts and expands in a free, flexible manner the body fills with breath. One would have to consciously resist this to prevent the filling of the lungs. The breath taken in this way means expansion, inflation, ease, freedom. There is no desire to expel the breath got in this way; it is controlled easily and naturally from position — the level of the tone. When the breath is thus got through right position and action, we secure automatic form and adjustment; and correct adjustment means approximation of the breath bands, inflation of the cavities — in fact, all true conditions of tone. Nature has placed within the organ of sound the principle of a double valve, — one of the strongest forces known in mechanics, — for the control of the breath during the act of singing. This is what we mean by automatic breath-control — using the forces which Nature has given us for that purpose, using them in the proper manner.

If the reader is familiar with my last two works, "Vocal Reinforcement" and "Position and Action

in Singing," he will have learned through them that we have not direct, correct control of the form and adjustment of the parts which secure the true conditions of tone and automatic breath-control. These conditions, as we have learned, are secured through the flexible movements which are the ground-work of our system. Therefore we say, *Trust the movements.* If you have confidence in them, they will always serve you. If you doubt them, they are doubtful; for the least doubt on the part of the singer means more or less contraction and restraint; hence they fail to produce the true conditions.

This automatic breathing, the result of the movements described, does not show effort or action half so much as the old-fashioned, conscious muscular breath. Breathing in this way means the use of all the forces which Nature has given us. Breathing in this way is Nature's demand, and the reward is Nature's help.

The devices we use to develop automatic breathing and automatic breath-control are the simplest possible exercises, studied and developed through the movements, as before described. In this way through right action we expand to breathe, or rather we breathe through flexible expansion, and we control by position, by the true level of the

tone. In this way, as we have found, all true conditions are secured and maintained.

We will take for our first study a single tone about the middle of the voice. Exercise three in Article One of this second part of the book will suggest the idea.

Sing a tone about the middle of the voice with the syllable *ah*. Lift, expand, and let go, by the use of the hands and the body, as before suggested. The lifting and expanding in a free, flexible manner will give you all the breath that is needed; and the position, the level of the tone, will hold or control the breath if you have confidence. Remember that automatic breathing depends upon first action, the movement from repose to the level of the tone. If the action is as described, sufficient breath will be the result. If the position, the level of the tone, is maintained without contraction, absolute automatic breath-control will be the result so sure as the sun shines.

The tendency with beginners and with those who have formed wrong habits of breathing, is to take a voluntary breath before coming into action. This of course defeats the whole thing. Again, the tendency of beginners or of those who have formed wrong habits, is to sing before finding the level of the tone through the movements, or to

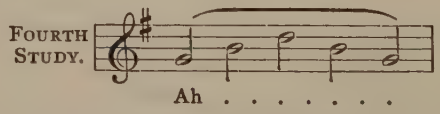
start the tone before the action. This of course compels local effort and contraction, and makes success impossible. The singer must have breath; and if he does not get it automatically through the flexible movements herein described, or some such movements, he is compelled to take it consciously and locally. The conscious local breath in singing is always an artificial breath, and compels local control. Under these conditions ease and perfect freedom are impossible.

As we have said, the important thing to consider in this study is the movement from repose to the level of the first tone. Move in a free, flexible manner as before described, and give no thought to breath-taking. When you have found the level of the tone, all of which is done rhythmically and in a moment, let the voice sing,— sing spontaneously. Make no effort to hold or control the breath. Maintain correct position the level of the tone, in a free, flexible manner, and sing with perfect freedom, with abandon. As the movement or action gave you the breath, so will the position hold it. The more you let go all contraction of body and throat muscles, the more freedom you give the voice, the more will the breath be controlled, — controlled through automatic form and adjustment. This is a wonderful revela-

tion to many who have tried it and mastered it. Those who have constantly thought in the old way, and attempted to breathe and control in the old way, cannot of course understand it. The tendency of such is to condemn it, — to condemn it, we are sorry to say, without investigation.

Knowledge is gained through experience. The singer or pupil who tries this system of breathing and succeeds, needs no argument to convince him that it is true, natural and correct. The greatest drawback to the mastering of it on the part of many singers and teachers, is the artificial habits acquired by years of wrong thinking and wrong effort. With the beginner it is the simplest, the easiest, and the most quickly acquired of all systems of breathing; for automatic breathing is a fundamental, natural law of artistic singing.

For further illustration of this principle of breathing we will use the following exercise:

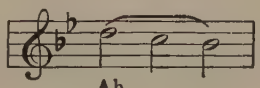


Place yourself in a free, flexible manner on a level with the first tone. If this is done properly, you will have secured automatically a singing breath and all true conditions of tone. When

singing this exercise move the hands and body with the tone or voice, ascending and descending. In ascending open freely and naturally by letting go. Do not influence the form by attempting locally to open. Do not influence the form by locally preventing freedom or expansion. Let go all parts of the face, mouth and throat, and you will be surprised at the power of the tone, of the breath, and of the breath-control on the upper tone. You will be surprised to find that you will have secured or developed three or four times as much sustaining breath power as you imagined you had. In descending, care must be taken not to droop or depress, but to carry the voice by controlling the movements of the body, and only after the last tone is finished should the body go into a position of repose.

Sing this exercise in all degrees of power, soft, medium and loud, maintaining the same true conditions on all. The tendency of most singers is to relax and depress on soft tone, or to pinch and contract. Soft tone should never be small in form, and it should always have the same vitality and energy as the louder tone.

FIFTH STUDY.



This exercise should be studied and practiced in every way suggested for the study of the preceding exercises. Place yourself upon a level with the first tone, in the manner before described, and thus secure the automatic breath. Do not forget to use the hands to suggest the movement to the body. The hands should be used until the body is thoroughly trained to flexible action. It is always a question of "the thought before the action." Do not allow a conscious or local breath before the movement.

Place yourself upon a level with the first tone, and allow or let the voice start spontaneously and freely. Make no effort to hold the breath. Hold from position. Sing down, moving with the voice, but do not let the body or the tone droop or relax. Neither must there be stiffness or contraction. If you find it impossible to control the voice in this way, or to prevent depression of body and of tone, then try the following way.

Place yourself upon a level with the first tone in the proper manner, sing down, but lift and expand with an ascending movement of the hands and body. Open the mouth freely and naturally, and let the tone roll out. You will be surprised to find not only great breath power and control, but a power in the tone that most singers imagine can

be got through physical force alone. This power is the result of expansion and inflation, the true reinforcing power. The increased vitalized energy of the tone is the result of the upward and outward movement. This movement of expansion and inflation through flexible action, is the true application of strength or of power. It is that which we call the reverse movement. We sing down and move up. It is the great movement for developing the low tones of all voices. This reverse movement may be applied at will to all the studies given; it will depend upon the effect we may desire to produce. If in descending, a quiet effect is desired, the movement is with the voice. If we want power we reverse the action. The body, when properly trained, becomes the servant of the will, and responds instantly to thought and desire. Hence the importance of correct thought.

In presenting these ideas to my readers, I realize how difficult it is to put them in words, and how much they lose when they appear in cold print. In working with a living, vitalized voice, the effect is so different. The reader who may desire to experiment with these ideas should place himself before a mirror, and make his image his pupil, his subject. In this way he can better study the movements, the action, the position, the level of the tone, and the breathing.

In private teaching, of course, we do not take up one subject or principle and finish that, and then take up the next one; but one idea is constantly built upon another to form the harmonious whole. The formula which we use here, as we have said, is the one adopted for the normal class at the Point Chautauqua summer school. This we do in order to have the system properly arranged for lecture, illustrations, and for a practical study of the devices, not only from the singer's, but from the teacher's standpoint as well.

The teacher or singer who studies and masters this course never questions or doubts the truth and power of automatic breathing and automatic breath-control; or the wonderful influence on the voice of these movements, which we call true position and action in singing.[1]

[1] The few exercises or studies here given, as well as a number of others, may be found fully carried out with accompaniment, in "Exercises for the Training and Development of the Voice," by the author of this work. Published by William A. Pond and Company.

ARTICLE THREE.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE OF ARTISTIC TONE-PRODUCTION.

THE third principle of artistic tone-production is

High Placing and Low Resonance.

Theory. — Tone, to be artistic, must be placed forward and high, and must be reinforced by the low cavities and chest resonance; it must be placed high, and reinforced or built down by added resonance through expansion and inflation.

Devices. — Place high by removing all restraint, all obstruction, through flexible movements. The high, forward placing is the natural focus of the voice. When the voice is thus placed and automatic control prevails, reaction and reflection occur, and the sympathetic low resonance of the inflated cavities is added to the tone. Also study the naturally high placing of E and the naturally low color of oo; then equalize all the vowels through their influence, and thus develop uniform color and quality in all.

This third principle of artistic singing is a very important one, and means much more than one might, at first thought, suppose. Many singers think of placing simply as the point of contact or impact of the air current. Placing, however, means more than this. It means not only the correct focus of tone forward and high, but it also means reaction and reflection of the air current; in short, sympathetic added vibration of air in the low inflated cavities. This being true, we find that correct placing means even much more. It means the true form and adjustment of all the parts — all true conditions of tone.

The prevailing idea of placing is the thought of constantly pushing up the tone. Result, the organ of sound is pushed out of place and all true conditions disturbed. The pushed-up tone means local, muscular effort, contraction, and a hard, unmusical voice. The voice thus placed may be loud and brilliant, but never soulful or beautiful. The pushed-up tone means singing from the larynx up. It means head-resonance only; and head-resonance is but one side, and that the smallest side, of this great question.

Tone must be placed spontaneously, with reaction and reflection. This shows at once the importance of the first two great principles of voice-produc-

tion, — freedom and automatic breath-control; for without these true placing is impossible. Tone placed in this way means the ring of the forward high placing and the added resonance of the inflated cavities and especially of the chest.

In singing, as we have learned, there are two forces constantly in action, — pressure and resistance, or motor power and control. These two forces must prevail, and in order to produce the voice artistically, they must be balanced. This is done, indirectly, through the movements we advocate, through the position and action of the body. The motor power lies in the diaphragm and in the abdominal and intercostal muscles. The controlling force lies in the chest, in a properly adjusted larynx and the approximated breath-bands. These two forces must be balanced during the act of singing. Most singers are much stronger in the driving or motor power than in reaction or the controlling force; and with many, the weakness in control, reaction or adjustment, is an absolute bar to success. Hence the importance of strengthening the chest, and the position of the organ of sound, through physical culture.

When these two forces, motor power and control, are not equal, the balance of force is placed upon the throat and throat muscles. This the singer can

no more avoid doing than he can avoid balancing himself to keep from falling. When, in order to place, the voice is pushed up, deliberately and maliciously pushed, both forces are exerted in the same direction. They are then virtually but one force — a driving force. As there must be two forces in singing, as Nature compels this, there is nothing left for the singer to do but to use the throat and throat muscles as a controlling force. Under these conditions, as before stated, the tone may be brilliant, but it will always be unsympathetic and unmusical.

I hope no one will think for a moment, in considering the movements we advocate, that we do not believe in strength and power. We do believe in applied power, applied indirectly; not by local grip and contraction, but indirectly through vitalized energy, expansion, and flexibility, through the true position and action of the singer. There is no strength properly applied in singing except through movement; through correct movement all the forces which nature has given the singer are indirectly brought into action; in this way there is constant physical and vocal development.

Every tone sung, as we have learned, is a reinforced sound. There are two ways of reinforcing tone. First, by muscular tension, muscular con-

traction, muscular effort — the wrong way. Second, by vitalized energy, by expansion, and by added resonance of air in the inflated cavities — the right way. Of course to produce expansion and inflation, true conditions of form and adjustment must prevail, through the movements given.

Form has much to do with determining the quality and character of the tone. Muscular effort, either in placing or reinforcing the tone, results in muscular contraction, and in most cases in elliptical form of voice, thus: This means depressed soft palate, high larynx, contraction of the fauces, closed throat, and spread open mouth. Result — high placing impossible, no low color or reinforcement; in short, hard muscular tone. The tone may be loud but it cannot be musical.

The true musical form of the voice is elongation, thus: This means high placing and low resonance; it means that the tone has the ring of forward high placing and the reinforcement, color, and beauty of added low resonance. Elongation is a distinguishing feature of all truly great voices.

For artistic tone, the soft palate must be high, the larynx must be low, and the throat and mouth allowed to form, not made or compelled. The form must be flexible and elastic. The larynx must be low in adjustment for the production of

beautiful tone, but it must never be locally adjusted. It must always be influenced indirectly through the movements we advocate, through the true position and action of singing. In this way are secured open throat, freedom of voice, all true conditions. In this way the tone may be placed by impulse, by flexible action, may be started high and instantly reflected into the inflated cavities. This means perfect poise of voice; it means the focus of the tone high and forward with the sympathetic added vibration of the low cavities and especially of the chest. This is the only true placing of voice, — the combination of head and chest resonance through automatic form and adjustment. A tight throat through local, muscular effort makes these conditions impossible.

The true resonance-chamber then, as we have found, is from head to chest; sympathetically the resonance of the entire body must be added. The true artist sings with the body, through the throat, and never with the throat. In this way the entire singer is the instrument. Fill the body with sound. The higher the tone the more elongated the form. Nature demands this. If this does not occur contraction and depression are sure to follow. Also the higher the tone the lower the added resonance, when the conditions are right. In this

way the form elongates and the compass expands without effort or strain. These ideas studied through flexible movements are truly wonderful, but natural means for expanding the compass of the voice.

Much has been written lately on the subject of open tones. Should the tones be opened or closed, is the question. Tone should never be closed. It should always be open, but never out. If it is out of the mouth it is not a singing sound. Even the real covered tones of the voice should never be closed. The truth is, the form of the covered tones of the voice, through elongation, is larger than the form of those which we call the open tones, in contradistinction to the covered.

In the clear timbre of the voice, the bright tone, the ring of high placing, predominates. In somber timbre, the dark tone, low resonance, or low color, predominates. In medium tone both are heard or felt more equally. None of this coloring or reinforcing must be done by locally influencing form or placing. The voice must be perfectly free; and the result must be due to sentiment, feeling, emotion, to the effect it may be desired to produce. If all restraint is removed, if true conditions prevail, this can always be done through the singer's sensation, through the use of the third power. It

is marvelous how, under right conditions, the voice will respond to thought, to sentiment, to feeling.

"The tone thus produced and thus delivered, with perfect breath-control, will set the *whole body sympathizing*, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head. And it is *only* tones like these — that it is possible to so adorn, and decorate, and beautify, with the due amount of emphasis, and accurate intensity of emotional feelings, and exquisitely shaded and ever-varying tinges of color in expression — that can prove capable of captivating the heart of the hearer, that can graphically impress the listener with such sentiments as the vocalist desires to convey."

We will take for our first study a single tone about the middle of the voice. In studying placing and resonance, we must of course observe all the rules laid down in regard to the action, position, etc. Do not take a voluntary breath before acting — do not start the tone before the action, two things which require constant watching on the part of the beginner. Either of them will virtually cause defeat.

Remove all obstruction by seeking the level of the tone through flexible action. Think the tone forward and high. Place by impulse, and never

by local effort. Have the sensation as though the tone started forward and high, as though it impinged against the roof of the mouth, and instantly reflected into the low cavities, and especially into the chest. In doing this, relax the jaw, let go all face and throat contraction, expand the body, and think and feel the chest vibrant and filled with tone. In this way the tone may be started high and reinforced or built down by the added resonance of all the inflated cavities.

Another way to do this, is to start the tone spontaneously by impulse through correct action; in doing so, think and feel as though the tone placed and reflected at the same instant, forward against the roof of the mouth and on the chest, — as though the contact or impingement of the tone were felt at both places simultaneously. Of course the high forward placing in mouth and face is the true placing, and the sensation on the chest is the action or reflection of the true placing. This can be done through flexible vitalized action alone. With a tight throat or local muscular effort it is impossible. This is perfect attack, and in this way all force and push are avoided. In this way freedom and inflation are secured, that condition which unites head and chest resonance.

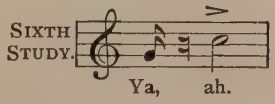
Think of a rubber pouch filled with air. Imagine

you grasp it in the middle with the hand, and close the hand tight. The upper part of this pouch represents the face and high forward placing. That below the hand, or the lower part, the chest resonance. The hand holding the middle of the pouch represents the throat. So long as the hand contracts tightly the middle of the pouch, there is no connection between the air in the upper and lower parts of the pouch. If the desire is to connect these two parts, relax the hand a little, and allow an opening or a free passage between them. In singing, the same relaxation or opening must occur at the throat, if the desire is to connect the ring of high placing with the resonance of the low cavities. If the desire is to reinforce, to build down, the extrinsic muscles of the throat must relax, and the throat must expand.

In thus placing and reinforcing tone, the pupil is guided or assisted not only by the sense of hearing but by the sense of feeling. There will be the sensation of freedom, of ease, of power; a feeling as though the entire body from the head down to the waist were open and filled with tone. Remember, however, this important fact, that it is possible to lift and expand, and even to let go, and yet not to influence the tone. We can act well and yet sing with a common tone. The pupil must think

and feel the tone, must think and feel the effect desired. The thought must precede the action.

This point is worthy of all consideration, — right thought or right feeling assists the tone in every way, has, in fact, a wonderful influence in developing right action. The idealized tone brings into action more of the true powers of the singer than it is possible to do in any other way.

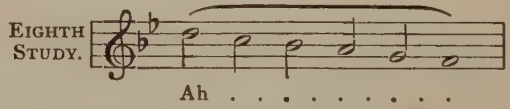


This study lends itself easily and naturally, not only to the development of high placing, but to correct bodily action.

Sing the first tone staccato, placing the body upon a level with the tone as described. Then from the level of this first tone, through flexible vitalized action, carry the body spontaneously or by impulse to the level of the upper tone; the air current or the tone should strike the roof of the mouth well forward and instantly reflect into the low cavities. In this way all true conditions are secured, and the voice is allowed to sing instead of being made or compelled. There must be a very free lift, expansion, and let go between the first and the upper tone. Do not let the

second tone start until its level is reached, or the effect will be spoiled, or at least modified. All this must be done rhythmically, which means without the least hesitation, or without the sensation of haste. To hesitate compels local effort. To hurry disturbs all true conditions. This is a very valuable exercise, if understood.

This study is virtually the same as the sixth, except that the voice is not suspended or arrested between the first and second tones. This exercise must be studied with the same action and the same impulse as the sixth study. Some singers can get placing and reaction better on this study than on the sixth.

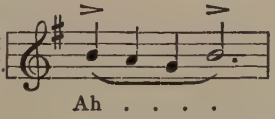


Find the level of the first tone as suggested, using hands and body; move down, hands and body going with the tone, while singing the first three notes of this exercise; then, without stopping or hesitating, reverse the action or the movement, by lifting hands and body, and opening wide by

dropping the lower jaw, while singing the last three notes. Of course the voice must sing from the highest to the lowest note with a continuous legato flow. The movement of the body down with the first three notes and the reverse action, moving up and out on the last three, must be smooth and continuous. If this is done properly the reverse action will give a wonderful sensation of freedom, openness, and the power of low added resonance. It demonstrates forcibly what is meant by placing up and building down.

This is the great idea or the great movement for developing the low tones in all voices. When the low tones are thus developed by expansion, but without effort, the same idea of freedom and low resonance can be carried into the high tones. This can be done especially well and easily on exercises six and seven. The higher the tone the lower the resonance should be if the object be a full beautiful, free tone.

NINTH STUDY.



Place yourself upon a level with the first tone as suggested, and allow the tone to start spontaneously, striking, as it were, the roof of the

mouth and the chest simultaneously. Move body and hands down with the voice to the low tone, and then instantly but rhythmically, lift back to the level of the upper tone. Feel as though you were under the tone with body and hands in moving up, and let the tone strike by impulse, the roof of the mouth, and instantly reflect into the chest. Practice this exercise until it can be done with perfect freedom of form and action.

In starting the first tone in all these exercises, feel the vibration in the face, on the forehead, and on the cheek-bones. If this is done without pushing, but by flexible action, a sympathetic vibration can be felt through the entire body.

A very effective and successful study of high placing and low resonance may be got through a consideration of the natural placing and resonance of the vowel sounds. As I have written so fully on the vowel sounds in my former works, I shall simply touch upon that important question here.

E as in *reed* is naturally the highest placed vowel in the English language. U or oo as in *you* or *do* is naturally the lowest in color. Sing E with the freedom of action as suggested, and think it high in the face. Make no effort to influence the form. The form of E is naturally very small. E will be found in this way to be free and bright,

not hard and wiry. Sing oo in the same way. The form of oo is also very small. Oo should have a flute-like sound. It will be found that in E high resonance predominates. In oo low color. In studying the vowels the aim should be to equalize them by placing, reinforcing, and coloring them as nearly alike as possible. In this way they are equalized instead of differentiated.

Place E as suggested, and color it by the thought and influence of the low resonance of oo. Sing oo as suggested, and brighten it by the thought, influence, and high placing of E. In this way study all other vowels, influencing them by the high placing of E and the low resonance of oo. The high ring and brightness of the reed sounds of the voice, must be modified and influenced by the color and low resonance of the flute sounds. The flute sounds of the voice must be made more brilliant and free by the influence of the high placing and high resonance of the reed sounds. In this way we equalize all the vowels until, in a certain sense, they all have the same color and quality and sound, as though they belonged to one and the same voice. For a further study of high placing, use the second sound of O, or, as some writers classify the vowels, the second sound of U, —the sound of uh as heard in up. This is the

highest, narrowest, and most elongated arch form in the English language; consequently it is, for many voices, the most favorable sound for the study of high placing.

All vowel sounds, like all tones of the voice, are reinforced sounds. The tendency of most singers is to sing the reed sounds too white and the flute sounds too dark. By properly distributing brilliancy and color we influence and modify all the vowels without losing their character or individuality.

Part Third.

ÆSTHETICS.

ARTICLE ONE.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE OF ARTISTIC SINGING.

THE fourth principle of artistic singing is

Emotional or Self-Expression.

Theory. — Vitalized emotional energy, the "Singer's Sensation," is the true motor power of the voice.

Devices. — A study of tone-color and tone-character; the idealized tone, applied and developed by the use of words and sentiment.

The student of the voice who has studied, understood, and, to a certain extent, mastered the first three great principles of voice production — the removal of all restraint, automatic breathing, high placing, and low resonance — has certainly accomplished much. He has aroused and developed the physical and mental vitality of the singer, the vitality and energy of body and mind. This is the limit of progress or development with many, at least so far as actual tone study is concerned.

There comes a time, however, in the experience

of every student of the voice, a stage of the study, when, if he expects to be an artist, he must take a step in advance, a step higher; he must place himself upon a higher plane or level; he must arouse his true inner nature, the singer's sensation, that which we have called the third power. This is done by a study of emotional, or self-expression. It is done through arousing and vitalizing the emotional energy. Vitalized emotional energy, the singer's sensation, is undoubtedly the true motor power of the artist.

At just what stage of development the consideration of this higher form of study or expression should be placed before the mind of the pupil, is a question. Singers are so different, physically, mentally, and emotionally. With some I have found it best not to consider this side of the question until they have developed a fair vocal technique. This should be the case with emotional, nervous, excitable temperaments. With hard, cold, stiff, mechanical pupils, this is often the only way in which it is possible to arouse them, in order to give them a start, without wasting weeks or months of precious time.

The development of this principle of vitalized, emotional energy, depends, as a rule, upon freedom of voice and the true conditions of tone as before

described. Therefore, in order to study this great question, in order to fully develop this higher form of expression, the singer must have mastered the flexible, vitalized movements given in this work, must have acquired through these movements absolute freedom of tone. Experience teaches us, however, that there are those who, while they learn, in a certain way, to do the movements comparatively well, yet do not entirely let go, — they do not free the voice. With such the study of tone color, and especially the study of soft color, not soft tone necessarily, but soft, emotional tone color, is their only salvation. It releases and relaxes all the rigid local tendencies.

There is a stage of study, as we have said, in the experience of all students of the voice, when, in order to become artists, Nature demands of them more than mere sound. There comes a time when every tone of the voice must mean something, must express something, through the character of the tone, the idealized tone. In this way the personal magnetism of the singer is imparted, heard, and felt. This means the expression of thought and feeling through the color and character of the tone, the highest known form of expression. This principle is the greatest known agency for the development of all the powers of

the singer, not only the emotional and mental powers, but the physical as well. The student of the voice who studies or who is trained in this way, develops, not only in character and beauty of tone, but in actual physical power and control. This study of tone color and tone character develops new power in every way. "The mechanical and mental alone are but half development, but this is full and complete development of the entire being." In proof of this, sing a light, bright, happy thought or tone, using the clear timbre, about the middle of the voice. It will require but little strength. Then sing a more emotional thought, sentence, or tone; express deeper feeling, and it will be found that more strength is required. Again, give utterance to tone or words which express sadness, sorrow, or intense pleading, using the somber timbre of the voice, and much more strength will be required. This will be especially noticeable in the action or energy of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles. It will be found that the low muscles of the body exert more strength on somber timbre than on clear tone. This, in order to induce the deep, low setting of the voice at the organ of sound, necessary for the production of somber or dark tone, and the expression of deep, emotional feel-

ing. It is easy to see that this means greater physical as well as emotional development; physical development, not only of every muscle of the body, but of the organ of sound itself; a development which can be attained through the study of tone color and emotional expression only.

The power of vitalized emotional energy, I might say the power of the emotional power, cannot be overestimated. The power of an emotional climax, imparted through the soft color of the voice, is often greater than that of the dramatic climax; it will often influence and affect an audience in the most startling way. We find that thought and will control all physical action in singing. If the thought is right, the action will be right; if wrong, the action will surely be wrong. When right thought and action have developed absolute freedom, then the emotional energy, the singer's sensation, the true power of the voice, should dominate everything. The mind or will controls the body through thought, but the thought must be aroused through feeling or emotion; and the feeling or emotion is inspired by the sentiment to be expressed. This means, of course, the higher form of expression, means the power of tone color and tone character; but it depends first upon all true conditions of tone, mental and physical, and

then upon the temperament, upon the heart, and soul of the singer.

Singing, as we have said, is more psychological than physiological. This whole system of flexible, vitalized movements, is first aroused by right thought, and finally applied and controlled through the mind or will, in response to feeling or emotional impulse. In this way we are able to arouse and use at will the persuasive, the impressive, the fervent voice; the voice that is something more than mere sound; the voice that has character and magnetism.

Compare two voices that are equal in every way in regard to power of tone, compass, and control. The one varies the color and character of the tone continually with the change of thought and sentiment, and is enabled thereby not only to avoid monotony, but to use the impressive, persuasive voice, the tone the sentiment demands. In this way he has magnetic power and influence over an audience. The other voice may be bright, free, and clear, yet may use the same quality or color of tone constantly on all styles of singing, and on all degrees of power, it matters not what the thought or sentiment may be; and this style of voice is by no means uncommon, even among many of our public singers. Now consider the difference in the

commercial value of these two voices, which should bear at least some relation to their artistic value. No artist can be truly great or fully developed without the power of vitalized, emotional energy, and variety of tone color and character.

Sing a tone, about the middle of the voice, without other thought than that of simply pure, free tone. It will be found that in the most beautiful voice the tone will be common-place, meaningless; in many voices it will be simply sound. Now place yourself in every way upon a higher, a more lofty plane. Think of higher ideas and ideals. In other words, idealize the tone. Remember, the ideal is the truth, and not exaggeration. Appeal to your emotional energy, the singer's sensation, and give expression to thought and feeling aroused in this way. Give expression to an actual life-throb, whether it be of love or hate, of joy or sadness, of ecstasy or despair. The result, the change of tone, character, and quality, will be astonishing, will ofttimes be electrifying. In this way make the tone actually mean something. Feel like a singer, assert yourself, express thought, sentiment, feeling, emotion, and not simply sound.

Simple sound, as a rule, is meaningless and unnatural. Nature demands, for the expression of beautiful, artistic tone, that all the powers she has

given the singer — the powers, physical, mental, and emotional — be brought into action and put into the tone. Character and magnetism of tone must be aroused in most voices. This cannot be done through the mechanical and mental powers alone. It requires the study and development of the emotional energies of the singer. In other words, the singer must put himself, not only upon a physical and mental level, but upon the emotional level of the tone as well.

All voices have two distinct color or character effects, the reed and the flute. These effects are the result of vowel forms, and of the predominating influence of high placing or of low resonance. When we desire brilliancy, the reed effect should predominate. When we desire dark color or more somber effects, the flute quality should prevail. In clear tone or timbre there is more reed effect than flute. In medium tone or color the effect of both is heard and felt. In the somber tone the flute predominates. To express joy or happiness we use the clear timbre, and the ring of high forward placing predominates. To express a deeper feeling, a more serious but not a sad tone, that which we call the emotional form, both the clear and the somber are heard in various proportions ; the high placing and the low resonance are about equally

balanced. To express sadness the somber color or low resonance predominates.

Apply these ideas on all the exercises given. Use sentences which contain thought or sentiment that will enable you to arouse a definite feeling. For example, to study the clear timbre, sing, "My *heart* is glad." To express the emotional tone, the tone which is not sad but serious, sing, "My *heart* is thine." To express a somber sound or sadness, sing, "My *heart* is sad." To express a ringing, dramatic tone, sing, "Thy *heart* is false." Thus we express four different effects on the one word, "heart."

This subject of emotional expression through tone color and tone character is so great, so important, that it is impossible to do it justice in this little work. I have written more fully on this and kindred subjects in my other works, therefore I shall here touch but lightly upon the æsthetics of the vocal art.

It should be remembered that the prime object for which this book was written, was to place more clearly, if possible, before my readers, the importance and wonderful influence of the flexible, vitalized movements of our system.

These movements, we find, so directly influence the voice, the singer, and the results in every way,

that we feel justified in again calling attention to them. Too much cannot be said of them, for the average student of the voice is inclined to neglect them. If they have been, to a certain extent, understood and mastered, then the study of this, the fourth principle of artistic singing, becomes a comparatively easy matter. With the student who does not understand them, emotional or self-expression is always a difficult matter, and with many an impossibility; which largely accounts for the great number of mechanical singers. At least twenty years' hard work and study have been put upon these movements in order to reduce them to the simplest and most effective form. They are based upon common sense and Nature's laws. Of course no one can or should expect to understand or fully appreciate them without more or less investigation.

ARTICLE TWO.

THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE OF ARTISTIC SINGING.

THE fifth principle of artistic singing is

Automatic Articulation.

Theory. — *Articulation must be spontaneous,* the result of thought, and of the effect desired, never of direct or local effort. The thought before the action, never the action before the thought.

Devices. — The development of the consonantal sounds through the study of the three points or places of articulation, and the application by the use of words, sentences, and sentiment, vitalized and intensified.

In our course of study or in the formula here given, it will be evident to the reader that we lay much stress upon the principle of vitality or vitalized energy. In the second part of this work we have considered the principles and the devices that develop physical and mental vitality. In the article which directly precedes this, special emphasis is placed upon emotional vitality. Vitality or vitalized energy, it will be found, holds good also in

this, the fifth fundamental principle of artistic voice production.

Articulation, to be artistic, must be automatic and spontaneous; must be the result of thought and effect desired, and never of direct or local effort. This being true, we must recognize the importance of freedom of form and action, of the removal of all restraint, in fact, the importance of all true conditions of tone. This brings us back again to our original position, as do all the fundamental principles of singing; namely, — the importance of the free, flexible movements of our system, upon which freedom of form and action, in fact, all true conditions of tone, depend.

Language, spoken language, has been considered by many a vocal weakness. Scientists have contended that the consonantal sounds weaken the resonance and power of the vowels. We have found the opposite to be true. We have found that the consonantal sounds in many ways are a wonderful help in developing the voice. This proves that which some one has so well said, "The demonstrations of yesterday are the falsehoods of to-day."

A free, flexible articulation of the consonantal sounds helps to place the voice, and gives it life and freedom. Articulation, under right conditions, will

not interfere with the legato flow of voice. It is not necessary, as many suppose, to sacrifice distinct utterance in song for the sake of the legato flow of voice, the most desired mode of singing. On the other hand, the free legato flow of the vowels need not interfere at all with distinct articulation. The voice is composed of two separate and distinct instruments, the organ which produces sounds or vowels, and the articulating organ which produces consonants. These two instruments, when properly trained, strengthen, complement, and support each other, and together they mold vowels and consonants into speech.

It is true that with many, articulation is a difficult matter, and this is especially true on the high tones of the voice. No one who has heard the majority of the average opera and concert singers of the day, would be justified in holding that articulation is not a lost art. A free, distinct articulation and use of words in song, is the exception and not the rule. This is due largely to the following fact — with most singers there is direct or local effort on face, jaw, tongue and throat, during the act of singing; in other words, they grip the parts to hold the tone, and the higher or louder they sing, the firmer the grip or contraction. This virtually paralyzes action, and makes flexible articula-

tion impossible. Articulation knows no pitch. It should be as easy on a high tone as on a middle or low tone. If there were no direct or local effort of the articulating muscles to hold the tone, articulation on the high tone would be as easy as on the middle or low tone. This is a fact which has been demonstrated again and again. Of course it is more difficult to learn to sustain the high tone without placing more or less effort upon the face, jaw, and throat ; but under right conditions, the result of right position and action, this can be done, and has been done many times.

Articulation, to be artistic, must be spontaneous, — the thought before the action. Think and feel the effect desired, and give no thought to the action of articulation. The action, under right conditions, if there is no restraint, will respond to thought and feeling ; it will be automatic and spontaneous. Just as the singer, after a certain stage of study, should never produce a tone that does not mean something, that has not character, so in the use of words, he should always sing them in a persuasive, impressive manner, and with free, flexible action. As, under this system, we never locally influence vowel form, so, after a certain stage of study we never locally influence consonantal action. To be right, it must be automatic and spontaneous.

Of course we recognize the fact that in all vocal study there must be a beginning. The pupil must be taught to know and think correct physical or mechanical action in singing. He must know what it is, what it means, and how to think it. Then it must be trained to respond to thought and will. This we call the first two stages of study, or the physical and mental. The mental, as the student progresses, must dominate and control the physical; and finally, as we have before stated, the true motor power is emotional energy or the singer's sensation. This order of study and development holds good in this fifth principle of artistic singing, as in all others.

The device to which we first resort for the understanding and development of articulation, is a study of the three points or places of contact. On page 183 of "Vocal Reinforcement" (by the author of this work) will be found a full explanation of these three points.

A vowel sound is the result of an uninterrupted flow of the vibratory air current. A consonantal sound, on the other hand, is the result of a complete obstruction and explosion, of a partial obstruction and explosion, or of a partial obstruction only. The place and manner of the obstruction and explosion, or of the obstruction only, deter-

mine the character of the sound. There are three points of obstruction or articulation :

1. The point of contact of the base or back of the tongue and of the soft palate.

2. The contact of the tip of the tongue and of the hard palate, the roof of the mouth.

3. The contact of the lips, or of the lower lip and the teeth.

Almost any first-class work on the elements of the English language will give the divisions and the location of the consonantal sounds. For the singing voice it is always best to simplify, hence we divide the consonantal sounds into two general divisions : the aspirates, those which are the result of complete obstruction and explosion, or of partial obstruction only, breath and vowel sound ; the sub-vocals, those which are the result of partial obstruction and explosion, or of partial obstruction only, sub-vocal and vowel sound. The sub-vocals, as ending or final consonants, are the most difficult of all to give their proper value and effect.

The student of the voice should study, understand, and practically train the action of these three points or places of articulation ; for at these three points, with a few exceptions, all consonantal sounds are made. Take all the consonants, and classify them in two columns, the aspirates or

breath sounds in one column, and the sub-vocals in another. We will give one example of each kind, as made at each point or place of articulation. By the aid of vowels we form syllables, and thus simplify the study, and make it more definite. The study of consonantal sounds without the use of vowel sounds is very indefinite and unsatisfactory.

We give the formula for the study of articulation, as found in "Exercises for the Training and Development of the Voice" (by the author of this work), on page 18.

Thus:	1st Point.	Ko Ok	— Aspirate.
		Go Og	— Sub-vocal.
	2d Point.	To Ot	— Aspirate.
		Do Od	— Sub-vocal.
	3d Point.	Po Op	— Aspirate.
		Bo Ob	— Sub-vocal.

Exaggerate the consonantal sounds in every instance, and the points of contact or places of articulation will be very evident. It will also be evident that the point of contact or articulation is much more positive on certain aspirates than on the sub-vocals; while on a few other aspirates the action or obstruction is so slight that it is almost impossible to tell where or how they are made. They are the exception to the general rule. To

such, however, very little attention or study need be given. Having studied the formula as given, classify the consonants in three columns, under the headings of 1st, 2d, and 3d points or places of articulation.

At a certain stage of study, when the student of the voice has acquired freedom and control, when he is able to release the face, jaw, tongue, and throat from all local effort or contraction, — at this stage of study it is wonderful what can be done in the way of articulation in a few days, by this system. I have known many singers who could produce beautiful tones, but who could not make themselves understood at all in the singing of a song; yet in a few lessons on these three points or places of articulation, practically applied by the use of words and sentences, they could sing the words of a song as distinctly as it was possible to speak them.

For the practical application of the above principles of articulation, form groups of vowel sounds, and make syllables by adding consonants, and sing them on single or level tones. First place the consonant before the vowel, making the articulation the initial sound of the syllable. Then place the consonant after the vowel, making the articulation the final sound of the syllable. Also sing

sentences on single tones or level movements. Analyze all the consonantal elements of the sentence. Take for example the following sentence, "We praise Thee, O God," and notice at which point or place of articulation each and every consonant is made. Let all articulation be free, flexible, and light in movement, not heavy or labored. Never work with articulation; play with it, but let it be distinct and definite. Make no effort of face, lips, or tongue; let all be free and pliable. Show no effort or contraction of the face in sustaining voice or pronouncing words. In other words, never sing on the outside of the face. Mouth and face must be left free and pliable for the outline of form and for expression. Use words and sentences in an impulsive, impressive manner without local effort.

Articulation must be rhythmically in sympathy with the movement or the rhythm of the song. Even though the voice may flow freely on the vowels, the articulation must not be hurried, nervous or spasmodic. This style of articulation often disturbs the legato flow and spoils the general effect. While of course it is not possible to sing the consonantal sounds, a beautiful effect is often the result of playing upon the consonant rhythmically, with the movement of the song.

ARTICLE THREE.

THE SIXTH PRINCIPLE OF ARTISTIC SINGING.

THE sixth principle of artistic singing is

The Elocution of Singing.

Theory. — The words and their meaning, in modern song, are, as a rule, more important than the music.

Devices. — A study to combine elastic vowel form and flexible articulation, applied by the emphasis and accent of important words and phrases; also applied through the color and character of tone, and the impressive, persuasive, fervent voice. In short, a study of pure diction.

Every singer and teacher of singing should, in a certain sense, be an elocutionist as well. Not an elocutionist from the standpoint of many who are called elocutionists, who are stagey, full of mannerisms, and who exaggerate everything pertaining to elocution. Of course the better class of elocutionists are not guilty of these things; but they do idealize everything, whether they read, recite, or declaim, and this in their profession is a

mark of true art. So must the teacher and singer learn to idealize not only the tone or the voice, but everything pertaining to the singing of a song. This must be done through the manner in which the sentiment, the thought, the central idea is brought out and presented to the hearer; through the impressive way in which the story is told.

The elocution of singing depends upon a knowledge and control of all the principles considered up to this point of study, — a knowledge and control of physical, mental, and emotional power, of freedom of form and action, of artistic vowel form and automatic articulation, of the removal of all restraint, in fact, of all true conditions of tone. To interpret well, the singer must have mastered the elocution of singing, must be able to bring out every vowel and consonantal element of the words, must know how to use and apply tone color and tone character, the impressive, persuasive, fervent voice. The singer must idealize not only the tone, but the words of the song; "just as the painter idealizes the landscape, so the musical artist must use his powers of idealization in interpreting the work of the composer." To be able to do this, his diction must be as pure, his language as polished, as that of the most accomplished orator.

The power of word vitality in the singing of a modern song, is one of the great elèments of success, if not the greatest. Not an exaggerated form of pronunciation, but an intense, earnest, impressive way of bringing out the thought. It would be interesting to know what per cent of teachers and singers can read properly the words of a song; to know how many of them, or rather how few of them, have ever given this phase of the study, thought or attention. Most of them act as though they were really ashamed to try, when you ask them to read the words of a song, and when they read them, they apparently have no thought of expressing, or no idea of how to express the elevated thought or feeling, necessary to bring out the author's ideas. It is almost impossible to make them idealize the words through the elocution of singing; and yet in the artistic rendition of a song, a ballad, or a dramatic aria, the words are often of more importance than the music. The singer should study the story of a song by reading it aloud upon the highest plane or level of emotional or dramatic expression. To do this, he must know and apply the elocution of singing. Then he should endeavor to bring out the same lofty ideals when applying the words to the music.

"Why do not singers read or talk as they sing?" was a question once asked by a prominent elocutionist. "Why do not elocutionists sing as they talk or read?" I replied. This, of course, at once suggests an interesting subject for discussion. To give the reason in a general way, is simply to state that singers, as a rule, do not apply the principles of their art to the talking voice. Hence they often read and talk badly. The same is true, as a rule, of elocutionists. They do not apply the principles of their art when they attempt to sing.

The devices we use are a study of elastic vowel form and flexible articulation, applied by the emphasis and accent of important words in phrases and sentences. Then a study of the character and tone color necessary to express the meaning of the words. Then a use of the earnest, impressive, persuasive voice, as the text may demand. By using these forces or principles, as suggested by the thought and sentiment of the words, we arouse the emotional power, the magnetism of the voice, and thus influence the hearer. Through the elocution of singing we place our emotional, our personal expression upon a high and lofty plane. We thus express the central thought, the high ideals of the composer, and through the earnest, impressive voice impart them to the hearer.

ARTICLE FOUR.

THE SEVENTH PRINCIPLE OF ARTISTIC SINGING.

THE seventh principle of artistic singing is

Interpretation.

Theory. — Singing means infinitely more than the use of words and music; it means the expression of the author's idea as a whole.

Devices. — The application of all true principles by drawing, as it were, a mental and emotional tone-picture, as suggested by words and music.

The following article upon this subject was kindly written, especially for this book, by my friend and pupil, the well known teacher, Mr. John Randolph.

Interpretation in song is the faithful reproduction of the intention of both poet and composer. This reproduction includes the revelation of the characteristics of the poem itself, whether lyric, dramatic, or in other ways distinctive. It also reveals the musical significance of the composition

to which the words are set. The melodic, rhythmic, and even harmonic values must be made clear to the hearer. But interpretation includes more than this reproduction, essential though it may be. If the expression of the intention of poet and composer fulfilled the sum total of interpretation, one performance would differ little from another. A clear-cut, automatic precision would be the result, perhaps as perfect as the repetition given out by a music-box and certainly no more interesting. Another element enters into interpretation. The meaning of the poem and its accompanying music must be displayed through the medium of a temperament capable of self-expression. A personal subjective quality must enter into the performance. The singer must reveal not only the significance of words and music, but his own intellectual and emotional comment upon them. Upon this acceptance of the inner meaning of words and music, and upon his ability to weave around them some strands of his individuality, depend the character and originality of the singer's interpretation as a whole. Let us see how this comprehension of the meaning of songs may be acquired; upon what foundations rests the ability to make the meaning clear; and if we can do so, let us discover the springs of that elusive quality commonly called

"temperament" which gives the personal note to one rendition as distinct from another, and without which the clearest exposition of vocal meanings becomes tame and colorless.

The singer is a specialist, but all successful specialization rests upon the broad foundations of general culture. The reason why there are so many singers and so few artists who thrill us with the revelation of the intimate beauties of the songs of Franz, Grieg, and MacDowell, to take only a few names from the rich list of song writers, is because people sing without acquiring the range of vision which makes such interpretation possible. How can one sing, let us say, a German song, imbued with German romanticism and melancholy, unless he knows something of the German art, the German spirit, the German language, the German national characteristics? A knowledge of literature, art in general, and the "Humanities," to use an old-fashioned word, is absolutely necessary to interpretation of a high order. Too often, alas, the singer imagines that the study of tone production, or acquaintance with musical literature, or a polished diction, will make him sing with the combination of qualities called style. Not so! Upon the broad foundations of general culture, which distinguishes the man of refinement from his less

fortunate brother, rests also the specific ability to sing with distinction. Moreover, the singer must have definite musical ability, natural and developed by study. He must thoroughly comprehend rhythm, melody, and harmony in order that his attention may not be distracted from interpretative values to ignoble necessities of time and tune. It is not possible to sing Mozart, not to say Beethoven and Wagner, without acquaintance with the vocabulary and grammar of the wonderful language in which they wrote. Familiarity with the traditions of different schools of composition and performance is necessary also in order not to sing the songs of Bach and Händel like those of Schubert and Schumann, or Brahms like the modern French composers; in order not to interpret with like effects indiscriminately songs of the oratorio and opera, of Italian, German, French, English and modern Russian schools.

Unquestionably the singer must have control of the physiological and technical possibilities of his voice. No one can make words and music mean anything while he is wondering what his voice may do next. Developed intelligence, emotional richness and refinement, musical knowledge, a properly placed voice capable of flexibility and color, distinct articulation, polished diction, these

are some of the preliminaries to successful interpretation in song.

Let us see what special qualifications assist in the actual performance of song, in the attempt to give pleasure or artistic gratification by singing songs for others to hear. In the first place let us consider the limitations as well as the advantages of the human voice. I must ask you to remember that considered as an instrument it is smaller in power than some instruments, shorter in range than many others, often less beautiful than the tones of the violin. But in one respect it transcends all others. It is capable of revealing the mind and soul of the one who plays upon it. The speaking voice, as well as the voice in song, reveals thought and feeling to the hearer; those subtler shades of meaning which distinguish man, made in the image of God, from his humble companions, are made clear to those about him by this instrument — this wonderful, persuasive, cajoling, beseeching, enthralling, exciting, thrilling, terrifying instrument! Have you not been moved by the tones of the speaking voice? How can we train the voice in song to express these varying shades of meaning, and can we learn to use them systematically instead of accidentally or when we are impelled by strong emotion? I know that there is

a popular impression that some singers possess a mysterious quality known as "temperament," and that others do not. Having this uncertain quality, one singer stirs an audience; having it not, the hearer remains unmoved. If by temperament, intelligence and emotional richness of nature are meant, I do not believe that anyone who is not to some extent possessed of these faculties can stir the feelings of his hearers to any considerable degree. But surely many, almost all people capable of conquering the physiological, psychological, technical, and musical difficulties to be overcome before learning to sing at all well, possess these qualities. And even if modern songs of the best type abound in subtle, emotional expression and varying shades of intellectual significance, it is, I believe, possible for most singers to gain in interpretative facility by learning to connect the thought and feeling underlying the song with the spoken words which are their natural outlet and expression.

I say spoken words; for speech is the more spontaneous expression of thought and feeling, through which individuality attains its simplest and most complete expression. Speech is the normal method through which we make clear our ordinary thoughts, feelings, desires, repulsions,

and attractions to those about us. Song is the finer flower of artistic expression, one of the means through which imagination and the creative and interpretative faculties find an adequate medium and outlet. But the words of the poem, whether spoken or sung, must first be thoroughly understood before the reader or singer attempts to make anyone else comprehend or feel them. Too often an apparent lack of "temperament" is only the failure to have a definite understanding of the meaning of the words the singer is vainly endeavoring to impress upon his audience. Let the singer recite or read aloud the words of his songs. This is a natural form of expression, and requires a less complex process of thought than singing, which demands several automatic reflexes in securing tone production; let him read aloud, trying to give out every shade of thought and feeling the poem contains, in a tone which is persuasive and appealing. Later, when he can do this with appropriate emphasis in speech, let him try to express the same meanings in his singing voice. In all probability he will find that he is much assisted by the music, if his tone production is reasonably correct and authoritative, and he be enough of a musician to grasp readily tonal values. The sense of the words, the emotion and thought underlying the

words, will suggest the color and character of voice appropriate to the expression and interpretation of the song as a whole. Of course, if he tries to impress upon his hearer that he thinks it rather weak and foolish to give up completely to the full significance of the words, and to impersonate their narrative or dramatic significance, there is no help for him. I am inclined to think that the fear of seeming exuberant or foolish, the unwillingness to give one's inner self to others, or a self-consciousness which prevents it, is at the root of much apparent lack of "temperament." The singer must be both the narrator of the story of the poem and the impersonator of the principal characters in that story. Upon the completeness of his understanding of the meaning of the poem, and his revelation of its meanings, as well as upon the absence of stiffness or self-consciousness in suggesting the moods or characteristics displayed, will depend the impression of temperamental force upon his audience.

The following suggestions may be of some value as devices in making songs mean something; and this, after all, is the object of all attempts at interpretation.

Suppose you take a new song — one you have never seen before. Do not sit at the pianoforte,

and play at it and sing at it until, after a fashion, you know it. This way of learning leads to the kind of statement recently heard after a peculiarly bad performance, "Why, I never think of the words at all when I sing!" Instead of doing this, if you have been taught to do so, read the song through, observing its general character. If thinking music without playing or singing be impossible for you, play it over, carefully noting *tempo* and other general characteristics, until you have an understanding of the melody, rhythm, and musical content. Observe how the words fit the music, still without singing. Then read the poem silently and carefully, and decide whether it is narrative, lyric, dramatic, churchly, or in other ways distinctive. Next read the poem aloud, giving the voice character appropriate to its sentiment, phrasing it intelligibly, observing the emotional portent, and coloring it accordingly. If the poem be narrative, tell the story with life and vitality; if it be dramatic, attempt to impersonate the characters concerned; if it be devotional, recite with dignity and devotional quality. Finally, when both words and music are well in the mind, if possible with an accompaniment, but certainly standing, sing the song. Sing, making a compromise between the strict rhythmical value of the notes and the de-

mands of the sense of the words. Keep the general outlines of the music so far as phrasing and rhythm are concerned; but whenever a sacrifice must be made, sacrifice the musical value and emphasize the emotion, the meaning, the poetry, the dramatic or narrative significance of the words. Phrase with this end in view; sacrifice anything except tone-production to this end. Do not distort the rhythm, but bend it sufficiently to emphasize important words and syllables, by holding them a little, at the expense of unimportant words or syllables. Finally, remember that misguided enthusiasm is not interpretation.

No real interpretation is possible without a full comprehension of the meaning of both words and music. Study the voice. Study its possibilities and its limitations. Study music until the musical element of difficulty is reduced to a minimum, and until the character, style, and traditions of the various song forms are well within your grasp. No matter how beautiful may be the voice, or how well placed, no amount of enthusiasm or temperament can atone for a meaningless or unintelligent treatment of the intellectual, emotional, and musical characteristics of the song as a whole.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

The tendency of many is to raise the hands and arms too high; the hands should not be raised above the waist-line. If raised too high, the energy is often put in the action of the arms instead of the body; or the upper part of the body only is moved, and thus the most important effect or influence for power and control is wanting. The action must be from the hips up, and not only from the hips, but the hips must act and expand with the body. Remember the center of gravity must be at the hips. If it is found that the tendency is to raise the hands too high, then try or study the action as follows:

Place the hands upon the hips, and when coming into action, when seeking the level of the tone, or during the act of singing, see that the hips expand freely and evenly with the body. This should be tried and practiced frequently by all in order that the movement may be from the hips up and not above the hips only. When the hips are

thus brought into action, the abdominal muscles and the diaphragm are strengthened, and their position and action are correct. When the upper part of the body only is brought into action the position of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles is often weakened. Remember that the basic law or foundation principle of our whole system of movements is movement from the hips up, including the action or expansion of the hips in connection with the movements of the entire body.

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